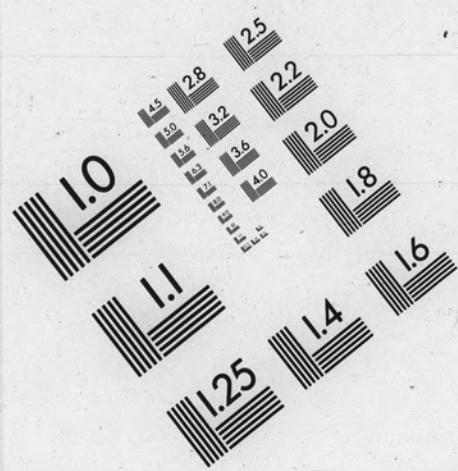
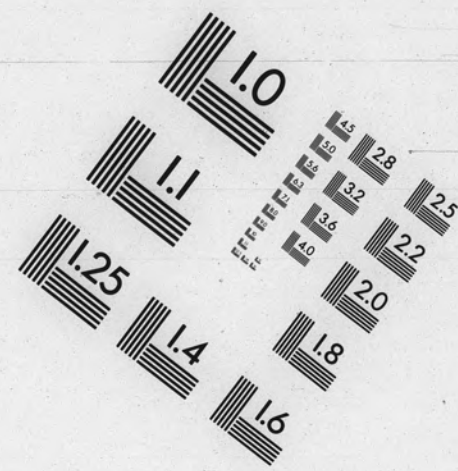


# Journal, 1940.

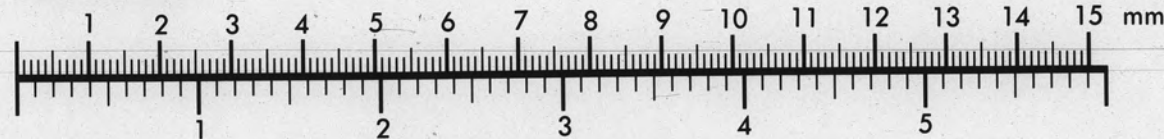




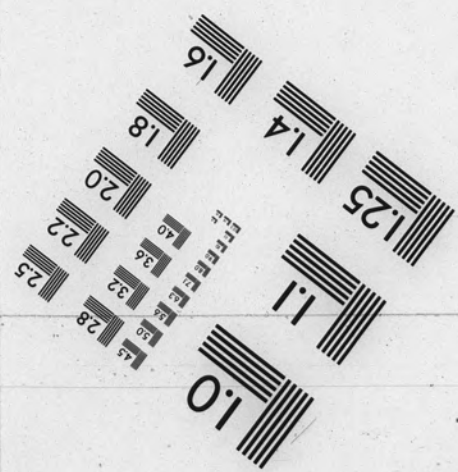
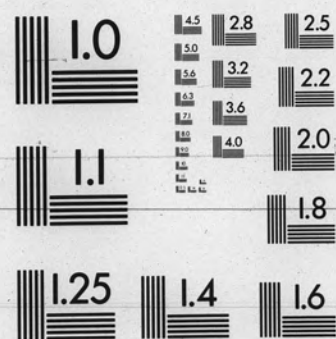
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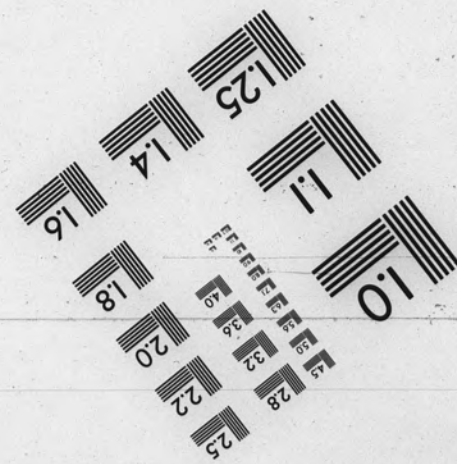
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Jan. 1st 1940. - Monday.

In his Journal Aunt Cammie's grandfather, Issac Erwin, always started off his first page of the year with a prayer.

I think it was a good idea, and by imitation I shall do the same: "Oh, Lord, help me to be a success in the meaning of the term as defined by Aunt Cammie: "Success is one's ability to make or to rather to help make another person's dream come true".

Another beautiful day, much blue and sunshine, with a chilly wind.

The morning wizzed by fast enough, what with all the letters I wanted to get off on the first day of the new year. According to the darkies, what one does the first day of the year, he will continue to do throughout, and so it looks as though I might write quite a few letters in 1940.

Celeste and J. A. came for dinner at noon, and when the board was cleared, Aunt Cammie and I sat before the fire and went over the mail which we got, --New York, Porto Rico, Shreveport and Texas.

At two, we joined Celeste in her car, stopped for a moment to get much feed and cakes at the store and the garage, for strange as it may seem, it's the garage that sells bread and cakes and not the store, and then we drove over to Madame Aubert-Acques.

We found her with her son-in-law, Webster, sitting before her fire and talking loudly and earnestly. It seems that Webster has been renting Madame Aubert-Acques's land from her, and paying her a certain sum each year, and helping her with her feed and house from time to time as do her next door neighbors. Recently, however, Madame's son has made one of his periodic returns home to live with his mother. He is such a scamp that he gives Webster to understand that he will work Madame's acres, and what's more, he is so disagreeable that neither Webster nor the next door neighbors will come to the house while he is there. Of course he has no intention to work the farm, nor has he any tools or other materials to do so if he wanted to, but at the moment this 60 year old scoundrel prays upon his poor old mother whom Aunt Cammie supports in a large part, and naturally she is in a quandary as what to do about it. Naturally she doesn't want him to up-set her whole livelihood and yet she doesn't want to turn him out,--if indeed she could. Aside from this, she doesn't know that in reality her farm has long ago been parceled off by the heirs who have already sold their share of their inheritance when it came to them to J. A. and I don't know to whom else. All I know is that she was in the fire when we arrived and was burning merrily until we were ready to leave. On our way out, however, poor Madame Aubert insisted that we wait until she could get some candy from her little altar which she has dressed in a cabinet with glass doors, and it had to make the rounds twice before we could tear ourselves away.

On our way back, we stopped before Zeline's picket fence and stuck a package of feed between the pickets, so that she, too, would have a new year's greeting.

Jan. 1st - cont.

We had lemon pie with our coffee at two, looking over clippings and reading a variety of news items that had come through in the noon's mail. Then I did a couple of hours work and at four I went over to Zeline's with some medicine and some chewing tobacco, the medicine for Zeline and the cud for Uncle Joe. I found that three visitors had preceded me, and we all sat before the fire and did the round of the weather, how bad the younger generation behaved and whatnot. The usual array of chats and dogs and chickens hovered around the fire, glad to find shelter from the cold wind. Occasionally Zeline would spank one of the other of these out of here way, until at last, getting annoyed at their persistency, she drew back the cheese cloth curtain over the single window of the cabin and I went after the whole meagerie and aviary, not giving up until they had all flown out the window.

This fete accomplished, she fussed around by the cluttered table at the end of the fireplace, and finally I saw her motioning to Joe, who understanding her sign, hobbled over and presented me with a dirty glass and a cracked decanter containing a strange mixture of wine and brandy, with which we drank to each other's health for the new year.

We then said au revoir, as the sun was already near the horizon, and I walked home at a brisk pace because I was late and because the air was brisk.

After supper we read before the Franklyn stove from Grace King's memoirs regarding Gayarre, and eight o'clock struck to send me home to bed.



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January 2nd - Tuesday.

Up and abroad at a few minutes before seven, with a cold wind blowing and great clouds blocking out the rising sun, with just enough rent in the zenith to assure a fine day when the sun had risen a little further.

I walked to Montrese, stepping along at a good pace, thanks to the chill wind. And so about the parish until about 9:30 when Sheriff Paine whizzed passed me in his car on the concrete road near Cypress, stopping and coming back to give me a ride as far as Montrese.

And so briskly up the lane again, for in spite of the sun that was dazzlingly bright, the ~~sun~~ wind was still chilly and I was delighted to find 10 o'clock coffee and milk waiting for me in the "adam's room."

Half an hour of plantation talk, and I flew to look after my mail, and so dinner, and after that the mail, bringing nice mail from New York and a letter from Edith Wyatt Moore, and much accompanying documentation which she had copied for me from original papers in the Foster-Slave-Price business.

She has promised to come to Montrese for a month as soon as she has concluded a week's speaking tour in Chicago on the 15th of the month. She is also sending a package of papers by express that I shall be anxious to explore.

The afternoon was passed enough, with much work on my machine, and a hurried supper and a couple of hours reading to finish Eliza Lyle Saxon's book on her Memoires of the Confederate War and then a little more reading from Grace King's memoires.

I always like to read from the latter, because it always puts Aunt Cammie in mind of some personal experience she has had with Grace King, and how the latter used to hold Court at her house in New Orleans once a week, and how mad Aunt Cammie was when she once discovered that Grace's silly sister, having control of a place on which a grand old country church yard was located, proceeded to clean the little church yard up but having all the tomb stones taken up from their original resting places and stacked beside the road.

I forgot to say that Tony came to see me this afternoon. I was interested to note the differences and similarities between him and his father. Frank is in all ways the quintessence of simplicity, kindness, faithfulness and industry while Tony seems to possess almost the same pattern except that his simplicity borders on dumbness, with a willingness to please without the intelligence to know how it should be accomplished. Poor puppet, like all of us, with inability, like me, to read, and probably a greater capacity for boredom, I can only wonder whose role on earth is the more to be envied.

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January 3rd - Wednesday.

Another beautiful bright crisp day. There was a frost that put a rim of ice around the great iron sugar pot, but the narcissus are still holding up nicely.

I had a busy morning get out a stack of mail and making notations on things in and about "atchez and Washington, Miss.

Dinner was rather dull with little talk save of parish politics of which I knew nothing.

Sister's baby stayed with the Madam all day while its mother and father were in Alexandria. When Elmer came up after dinner to receive instructions for supper, she was so enchanted to watch the baby that Aunt Cammie ~~said~~ said: "Elmer, I'll bet you don't ~~me~~ know nothin' that I've been tellin' you to have for tonight", but Elmer reassuringly said "Oh, yassum, I knows all you done say."

I remember hash was one of the items I had suggested, and was enchanted to learn that it would be included on the menu. Elmer said she sure did know how to make it, after Aunt Cammie had told her to be sure to see to it that there was cornbeef and Irish potatoes in the house.

In the afternoon Dr. and Mrs. Rand from Alexandria called with their son and a Mr. Johnson from North Carolina, who is a classmate of young Rand in Tulane Medical School. The Madam entertained Mrs. Rand before the Franklin stove, since the baby couldn't very well be carried down stairs because of his cold, and I did a Greek's tour of the cabins with the gentlemen. Dr. Rand seemed a good egg, but I didn't get very far with the two youths. The North Carolina youth settled one point for me which gave me a laugh. He told me he knew I was from Charlestown South Carolina because of my accent. It is certainly amazing what a long beard and a wild imagination will combine to do for a situation.

At noon I had listened to Roosevelt address his final message on the state of the union to congress, and we accordingly did a little round on that point, but we didn't get very far.

They left about four and I made a little exploration of my proposed location for the lake, returning for supper about five, all primed for some of that Elmer hash. Of course it turned out to be a dish of fried cornbeef, submerged in a brown gravy,--with n'er a sign of a potato. As meat and gravy it wasn't bad, but as straight hash it was certainly a washout.

The Dr. and sister came at six, took the baby home after supper, and Madam and I chatted before the Franklin stove until 8, when I returned home, listened until 10 to an all negro programme and so to bed.



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January 4th, '40.- Thursday.

I heard the clock strike five, and it was pleasant to turn over and go back to sleep, letting the dawn break through as best it could, what with the torrential ~~xxx~~ rains that were pouring outside.

Frank came about 6:45 with coffee and built an amazing fire, so I sat before it listening for news and forgetting my shave and shower until after breakfast.

With the rain continuing to stream down, I was delighted to busy myself at my machine, straighten out papers and dash over to the big house to explore drawings of Governmental plans of old plantation houses. With the treasure of stained glass that I expect to harvest from destruction within the near future, it is fun to formulate plans for a house that will suitably house this treasure on the little lake we are planning.

Dinner was in reduced numbers with J. H. in New Orleans and Van in bed after a busy night.

Sam Brown brought the mail at one o'clock. There were a nice collection of periodicals for me from Lydia, a couple of letters from West Feliciana and Shreveport. Miss Cammie had some clippings from Robina, and glancing at the first, she said to me: "Listen, darlin', 'A Historic Home Burns in Natchez'" adding "And which one do you think it is?"

"Homewood", I responded, and the "adam" most fell out of her chair, for Homewood it proved to be.

Robina and I had made a special detour to pass by Homewood when we were on our way to The Cottage some weeks back. It looked stately and magnificent in its splendid setting of well arranged gardens, apple lawns, its beautiful fountain and marvelous old trees.

And Homewood meant something to me, took because Christian and I had been entertained there when we were in Natchez in the summer of 1938., and we had been enchanted with the fine taste Mr. and Mrs. Swann had used in restoring this lovely old place.

We were at Homewood twice, but the time I remember most vividly was the day we went for afternoon cocktails, arriving about four and discovering that cocktails might,--as in fact they did, last until near mid-night.

Homewood had been build by David Hunt about 1855, noble in the simplicity of his beautiful brick, its remarkable example of ironwork on the side gallery and its imposing portico of great white pillars across the front. Sometime after the Confederacy, Homewood's original owners had to relinquish her but in spite of the vicissitudes through which she passed when she served for a time as an Inn, Homewood was made of such heroic stuff that she weathered these leaner years.

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Jan. 4th - cont.

The Swann's had purchased Homewood shortly after Stark Young had laid his wedding scene of SO RED THE ROSE in its gracious parlors, and the Swans had expended thousands of dollars,--some have said 60,000 or 100,000 dollars in bringing her back to her original beauty.

Outside it was hot the late August day we came for cocktails. Mr. Swann greeted us, and for a while we sauntered about the rooms on the main floor, all of which had been finished in a just off white tone, and shorn of all decoration except for the lovely silver locks and doorknobs. The rooms were at least 20 feet in height, and I suppose the French windows ran up about 18 feet. These were draped in a magnificent pale blue and gray taffeta which was of such a quality as would have enabled them to stand alone if they had not been beautifully caught and draped from on high. The great hall ran straight from front to rear, both entrances having lovely fan and side lights of beautifully tinted glass that enabled one to see out through without anyone from the outside being able to see in. A grand colonnaded staircase, still white, except for the mahogany rail, swirled up to the first story above, and standing at the stair-well and looking up, one could see it continue to curve and twine on and on to the observatory on the roof.

The front room at the left as one entered was the library, with the bookcases the same off white color as the walls, and the books looking as though they had been read again and again,--contemporary and classic, theatre publications, novels, histories and so on. The enormous proportions of the room made the book cases still seem rather small, although I suppose they must have lined the walls from the floor up to about ten or twelve feet.

The room to the left of the great hall was also exquisitely plain in its off white finish, its elegant pale blue and gray taffeta drapes, and its deep soft white rug. This was a drawing room, peopled with lovely pieces that were treasures from the Louis XVI and Directoire periods, the small chairs beautifully upholstered in pale blue and gray and the mantle piece a glory in quite Directoire elegance, too. The room immediately behind this, after crossing the cross formed by the two halls that cut the lower floor into squares, were respectively the dining room, containing four rare original tubedons,--Indian Chieftans, if I remember correctly, and a drawing room, furnished with the same exquisite taste as the rest of the house.

Only once on the first floor, did the Swanns take a flyer into the contemporary. It was in a larger room formed by an buttressing wing at the rear. Here the house was surrounded by a moat, and this final room was framed in blinds, which could be thrown open to all out doors if desired. It was in this room that the Swanns had "gone to town" in modern decoration,--but



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Jan. 4th - cont.

with infinite good taste. It was the bar,--the bar prefer running across the far side of the room, its gleaming brass rail gleaming smartly against the mahogany bar itself. The room was so huge, that even though the bar ran the entire length, it took up but a small portion of the space, and on the opposite side of the room comfortably upholstered, low lounging chairs, low tables and conveniently placed occasional tables were seemingly arranged with abandoned, but obviously place in such a manner as to give a maximum of comfort and relaxation to the guests.

At the bar, Mr. Swann asked us what we would start with, and as he had mentioned his experience in doing mint juleps, we chose that, with Mr. Swann doing the honors for the first drink, while the white-coated darkie polished off glasses and anticipated labors that would keep him busy for many an hour after sun down.

Mr. Swann was about 35, I should say, and his age impressed itself in one's mind when as we were first sampling his excellent concoction, Mrs. Swann's son came down, and we were struck by his ~~appearance~~ his appearance, for he looked much like his father in or step-father, and seemed about the same age. If I recall correctly, he was interested in play writing, acting or something about the theatre. I believe he was studying at Harvard.

Mrs. Swann joined us shortly, radiant in health, so smartly dressed that I scarcely recall the details of her plain white sleeveless sports dress, although the whiteness of the frock did make Mrs. Swann's glowing tan and the scarlet of her nailpolish stand out more strikingly. Her make up was only in matters of lipstick and eye pencil,--the glorious complexion the more striking through the absence of a powder.

We spoke of things in Natchez, New Orleans, New York and Paris. We spoke sometimes in English and sometimes in French. With the coming and going of mint-juleps, we touched on a variety of subjects, and always the conversation flowed along with that ease that comes with an assurance one gains in realizing that any subject would meet with equal enthusiasm and intelligence of all the participants. A little before six, and we stood before the bar and talked and lounged in the smart low chairs, sampling shrimp, cheese, cold custs, pickles of curious brews, deviled eggs, savory spiced concoctions that appeared on the comfortable low tables beside our drinks, were sampled, and disappeared again to be replaced by duplicate great serving platters of new variety and color design. It is said that Mr. Swann was coming in to a forty million dollar trust fund. He and his wife had used part of their money well in saving this beautiful old home, and they were spending money for entertaining in a handsome manner, too.

The evening wore along, guests formed in little groups in the bar or strolled from one beautiful room to another, and once Mrs. Swann invited us to go with her to the second floor to

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Jan. 4th - cont.

to see her prize Felice Dogs which always stayed with her up stairs. They were splendid specimens, but somehow seemed a little out of place in the surroundings.

On the second floor the wonderful collection of French Impressionist canvasses were hung,--not just pictures by famous French painters of the last half of the 19th century, but about the best pictures of many of these artists. Renoir was there, and I don't recall the others, although I seem to remember a Degas and possibly a Rousseau.

And up here also were marvelous little French marble mantles, and master bedrooms that were each a marvel of perfection in simplicity of furniture and a quiet elegance that characterized everything which the Swanns had touched in bringing back Homewood to its original status as a great home.

I recall that Madame Swann spoke of her work on the gardens, saying that just after she had finished some of the terracing and planting of hedges, a terrific rain came at night, and how she had jumped into rubber boots, roused the gardeners and labored mightily to prevent this work being washed away, and how her boots had got stuck in the mud, and how she labored on until in her bare feet, soaked through and through, but finally conquering the elements.

Mrs. Swann is a vibrant woman, and I imagine she dominates much that she brushes up against. I imagine, too, that she could bite your ear off if occasion demanded, and I doubt if she handled her darkies with anything but the lash. But everything that I ever saw of Mrs. Swann was chic and beautifully contrived, and I must say her well ordered household was a pleasant place to be entertained. I think she felt that she was something of a Yankee in Natchez society, and surely she must have been envied on many counts, her youthful husband, her youthful appearance, their ~~wealth~~ <sup>seeds</sup> of money, which of course, means power, and because of this I suppose many a brick bat flew in her direction from a variety of Natchez tea-cups. For myself, I must confess that I have heard her razzed aplenty, but I must say that I shall always admire her on many counts, not the least of which will be the excellence of her good taste in making home again into one of the loveliest places in Natchez.

And now to read in today's paper that yesterday Homewood went up in smoke.

The clammy weather made the hearth seem twice as gay, and after supper the Adam and I read plantations a bit, and hence to bed.



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Jan. 5th - - Friday.

It was good to awaken early and realize that yesterday's downpour was done and that the sun had already made up its mind long before it appeared over the horizon.

After breakfast, I hammered out a lot of mail and things, and was delighted in the midst of it to hear Aunt Mammie's footsteps on my gallery.

She had run over only for a minute to say hello and to tell me how things were going at the big house. It seems that Mr. Daudet had been painfully ill all night. Frank had explained when he brought my breakfast that the gentleman was sufferin' from "gravel". Of course I hadn't the vaguest idea what that might be unless it were gall stones, for the only living thing that I had ever heard of having gravel was a chicken in its croup, and that was supposed to be good for it.

And so away Aunt Mammie flew, and I back to my machine, and hence at eleven thirty to the store to have my mail, and so on down to Cain River bridge for a little constitutional before dinner. The sun was bright and the mud puddles were easy to skip in the noon day sun. Others have tried it at midnight and found it more difficult navigating.

Dinner went off dully, with Mrs. Stone of Hawaii trying to set the la but getting nowhere, what with the vast silence that reigned on one side of the table and the lack of anyone's interest in what Mrs. Stone had to toss out.

Eugene shouted at Elmer for coffee in due time, and I anticipated the duxxxx completion of the meal with satisfaction foreseeing that Aunt Mammie and I could for a moment collapse in each others arms in hilarity. But coffee was slow in coming and we waited for Elmer. Finally Aunt Mammie asked Eugene if Elmer had heard him. "He didn't know, so sang out again, "Yassum" rather weakly came back in response, and we waited. It was obvious that Dan was getting more ruffled by the moment. "Elmer" Aunt Mammie called, and back came a kind of "Yassum" but neither Elmer nor the coffee put in an appearance. After calling once again, Aunt Mammie, sensing how near the boiling point things were growing, bolted for the kitchen to discover what, if anything, was up. She didn't return immediately, but from the front gallery in came Dr. and Sister, and there was much greeting of Celeste and Mrs. Stone, whereupon Dan folded up his napkin and left. The Dr. went up stairs to see Mr. Daudet, and eventually Elmer appeared with coffee for all that was left of us at the table,--Eugene, Celeste and I. The coffee wasn't even luke warm. We reared at all the struggle and the disappointing results, and we laughed more when we asked Elmer what the trouble had been she giggled and said: "I done forget until you all sang out for it".

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Jan. 5th - cont.

In the meantime, the Dr. had found Mr. Daudet seriously ill and in need of an immediate operation. He accordingly gave him an opiate, and our guests were provided with a chauffeur,--Fugabeu, and sent on his way to take Charles.

Supper was considerably reduced in people at the board, with only four of us present. When we were done and lingering by the great nine foot fireplace and Elmer was taking away the dishes, the Madam said:

"You know, I suppose, Elmer, that everybody was a-fussin' about their coffee this noon, and you'd better not forget to make it again. Maybe you don't know it, but Mr. Dan for one was getting pretty hot when you didn't have it even made."

"Yassum, I shu' does know alright. I could even feel the heat 'way out dar in de kitchen. I whur ain't gwine forget dat again."

"Well, that's out of the way the," said Aunt Mammie dismissing it. "But tell me, Elmer, did you do as I told you and get weighed in the setre today so I can tell Dr. Wenk how much you lost after his treatment?"

"Yassum, I shue did get myself weighed and I lost one pound, 'cause I weighed 209 pounds two weeks back and today I weighs 208."

"Well, that certainly ain't leessing Much, Elmer."

"Yassum, you're right Miss Henry, but you see I guess I ain't never gwine get very small, cause you sees my families is all big and so I'se from a big foundation, so looks like I'll always weigh 200."

Elmer had finished her work a little after seven and gone home to her three children,--th eldest of whom is just 7. It seems that one of them had been so hungry he had eaten a piece of dough, and of course became violently ill. And so late in the night, Elmer came hot-footing it over to the big house to have the Dr. summoned, and so Elmer's curious life speeds on. With her husband a fugitive from justice, having killed a white man, he can never show his face in these parts. Elmer must accordingly drag up her children as best she can. Her father in law and mother in law live in a cabin next to hers, but they will have nothing to do with the family, and while other neighbors will sometimes go in Elmer's cabin during the day and fix up the fire for the children, their grandparents will neigh enter the house or lift a finger.

Et voila la famille de mon domestique bien-ame. "On fils cette meuche sans raison de la grande ville me dit que son pere aime toujours sa femme, numere un., qui avait quitte son marie quand leur fils etait petit, pour demeurer avec un vrai noir Il y a des enfats mais ca c'est assey pour le moment.



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Jan. 6th - Saturday.

I awoke at five and finding it chilly, made a fire which Frank would have found amateurish and jumped back into bed until seven when Frank arrived with coffee and a giggle at the curious conflagration I had made in the fireplace.

My shower was of such a temperature that it was fun to dash through it fast, and gallop up to the glowing grate for a substantial breakfast, the hot bacon and hotter coffee seeming twice as good.

Then for a quick tour through the gardens, and up to the Madams room for a little chat before getting back to my machine where I worked until noon. After a quick glance through the mail, we did a little tour together in search of flowers, and the results were satisfying by way of opulent bunches of hyacinths and narcissus.

Before two o'clock it started raining in torrents and on bringing me my afternoon coffee, Frank told me that Debina, whom we had expected this evening to spend the week-end, had telephoned from Shreveport that she felt the weather a little uncertain to attempt the trip. She had expected to bring Miss Nellie back with her, and having cleared decks of the Stenes and Daudets, we had anticipated a nice Saturday and Sunday with our friends.

About four o'clock, Aunt Mammie came over to share the latest kitchen disaster with me. A little earlier in the afternoon, she had instructed Elmer how to prepare a ham for tonight's supper, but the "adam" discovered in passing through the kitchen a little later that Elmer had skinned the ham, removed all the fat and was then submerging it in water, for what reason I am uncertain. One look at the situation and the Madam flew out, with Elmer following soon after to receive instructions as how to save it, saying: "Land's sakes, Madam, I'd rather kill a man than make dat mistake".

But the "adam" merely said: "Mistakes don't matter, you hear? if you learn something by them and try not to repeat them"

But after Elmer had departed, we both agreed that she probably never would find out what cooking was all about and that in reality it was our fault for expecting her to comprehend something when God hadn't supplied her with what it requires to comprehend in such matters.

So the ham was sliced and fried and was the best item on the supper menu, and afterwards, with the torrents still coming down, the "adam" helped Elmer get the kitchen back in order, so that she could get home the earlier. And then the Madam and I started reading Patrick's "Literature in the Louisiana Plantation Homes Prior to 1861". Patrick had examined the Melrose library and the Parlange, too, and as we were acquainted with certain other libraries touched on in the article, we found it doubly interesting.

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January 7th - Sunday.

And so I awoke on what might be termed a Louisiana Winter. I hope it is never more so, for while in Shreveport yesterday it actually did snow, at Melrose it merely rained and today it continues rainy with a low temperature but no snow. The gardens seem as green as usual and I trust the flowers may not be affected by the cold which this morning's radio suggest is on the way from Texas.

I don't know where the morning went, but probably evaporated through the keyboard of this machine which was pretty busy until dinner.

There was the usual gathering from Loutierville and Paine and Frances came down from "atchiteches".

After the scattering at the conclusion of dinner, Frances came over to chat with me for a little while. I liked her and we had fun going over Alberta McKensie, the New Orleans artist, and others.

In the afternoon I worked by myself, concentrating primarily on plans of Angelina Plantation buildings. It seems to me one of these might make a wonderful opus for using the Bohemian glass,-- if and when, we rescue it from oblivion and destruction. I think it would look well,--this proposed building, on the far side of the proposed swan lake, elevated a little, and as a little temple in white against a background of magnolias should give the building a satisfying dignity and simplicity that will enhance the value of the beautiful glass when one steps through the the portal. I hope this may get under way immediately before it is too late for me to see before it is too late.

In the evening, after everyone had departed, the Madam and I talked before the Franklin stove of a dozen and one things, for I felt the day had been so busy for her that reading might be better if held for the morrow. We spoke of the old man of 84 over in Dallas who does some of her fine binding for her. He used to be connected with the "A. and T." railroad, but cataracts lost him his job, and so at an advanced age, he took up bookbinding of which he knows nothing or crather of which he knew nothing, but now is an artist in maintaining a wonderful sympathy for repairing old volumes which need to be put back into their original fine covers. He had spoken once to the "adam" of the need for getting glasses, and characteristically, she sent him an advance check, so that he could have his eyes taken care of right away. But in the next mail came a letter from him, returning some papers that had been inadvertently left in the volume recently sent him for repair, a clipping about The Aigrette Autobiography, together with the check she had sent, and all these attached to a lovely letter, speaking of his enthusiasm for his work, but never mentioning the check he returned.

And at eight I retired, listened to Becky Sharp with Ol Wells and H Hayes, and so to sleep.



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January 8th - Monday.

It was a hard frost that whitened the gallery steps and the top of the fences, as I discovered when I started out for my early morning walk. I had thought I might get down to Melrose, but I found that the rising sun would likely turn the lane into a quodmire before I should have time to get back and so I contented myself with a sprint to the bridge and back.

I worked until about eleven when I went out to investigate what damage the cold had done to the gardens. It is rather surprising that in spite of the ground being frozen, the narcissus and hyacinthes were seemingly untouched by the cold and the lantana that crawls up my chimney is still as much of a glory in purple as ever.

Dinner came and went with little or no excitement, save for the biscuits which were curiously dark on top but tasted fine. When all had departed save the Madam and me, Elmer poked her head in from the pantry, saying she hadn't dared to show her face in the dining room, she was so ashamed of the "little nigger biscuits", grinning the while and showing the most perfect set of white teeth I ever saw.

The mail was good from New York and the West Indies, with Aunt Mammie almost standing on her head to read some of mine that was written so curiously that she couldn't make out much of it. Some day, I suppose, everyone will use a machine for writing personal notes. Heaven knows it's going to be easier for people to keep in touch with those who write so individualistically that no one can make out their long hand.

In the late afternoon I started for Celine's to take her some medicine, fearing that this weather might have brought on another of her periodic cases of "lumenia in the top of my head", but the roads seemed a little to squishie, and so I turned back.

Because of the extra chill in the air, Frank made me a finer fire than usual and while he was busy at this task in which he excels so mightily, I enjoyed speaking with him about his family, and was interested to learn that he was uncertain of the age of any of his children although he said that he had their birth day marked down somewhere in his house. So many people who are white go to such lengths to cover their ages, I must say that they might take some lessons from the mulattoes and try forgetting what they so obviously don't want to remember.

And as for Frank's little boy, I suppose he is around seven, but the poor child is really too white, for his complexion is almost the color of a slightly tanned white child and his hair is straight

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as 8th - con.

and his hair is of an ashen hue that is almost blonde, and it is easy to wonder what place there is in the world for this soul when it is a little older. With a group of negroes, he will certainly seem white, and with mulattoes he will seem too white and with white people he will appear disturbingly not quite white enough. I suppose one of the most foolish errors a man can make is to try to anticipate the place a child like this may occupy and the difficulties he may encounter as a result of the combination of negro and white blood that is in his veins. And yet I cannot imagine any thing more provocative of concern in the heart of any human being than the contemplation of the route which such a child will have to travel as he grows to manhood. At the moment I recall so vividly an old professor of philosophy who used to say to us in college days: "Gentlemen, sometimes on a beautiful sunny day, I look ~~now~~ out upon the world and the marvels of Nature, and I cannot help being impressed with the wonderful order in which the universe seems to move. But on other days, Gentlemen, when the earth is subjected to storm and disarray, I am sorely perplexed, for at the far end of the pendulum's swing, I seem to find all the cosmic world in chaos, with all that happens to the earth and the people who live there seeming to be utterly helpless in a confusion over which none of us have but the vaguest,--if indeed we have any, control, the entire universe seeming to swing through space and like the people who inhabit it, utterly incapable of finding out any rhythm or reason for any of it".

Et voici quelque chose de nouveau. Apres avoir quitte la dame, j'ai trouve le fils aine de mon domestique chez moi. Il restera chez son pere pour le moment. Apres avoir demeure dans la grande ville, il y a peu des chose pour lui a faire ici, et il y a aussie la haine des enfants de la maison. Qu'es ce qu'en pour faire. ~~KKKK~~ Pauvre petitsperdus dans un monde assez difficile



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January 9th - Tuesday.

I thought I was a little sleepy this morning when Frank arrived a little before seven with my coffee, but after I had had a cold shower and stepped out into the bright sunshine and the frosty air, I realized that the ozone was too invigorating to permit me to contemplate "laying-long".

Crossing Main River, the surface as usual placid as usual, and the blue had returned to it after the gray brought on by the recent rains, and it was easy sliding down the lane toward Montrese, thanks to the firmness of the earth which the sun would shortly dissolve into something closely approaching mud.

I was home again a little after ten, had coffee with the Madam, and so to my typewriter for the rest of the morning.

Dinner was much as usual and the mail came early with a grand collection of magazines, clippings and what not to busy us for an hour or so before laying them aside for further perusal this evening.

At two I had tea alone in my maisonette., "tea" consisting of Louisiana coffee, fruitcake, a glass of milk and a cigarette, during the enjoyment of which I flicked on my radio as I lounged by the fire, letting whatever came from the tubes that might. To my surprise, it was a review of current literature from Chicago, having much to do with THE FOXES by Harris, the author supplementing the broadcast from Washington with a list of his three favorite regional novels. These were The Yearling by Williams, None Shall Look Back by Gordon, and - of all things - Children of Strangers by Saxen. It was rather curious to sit here in the midst of the "children" and hear them described from some point a thousand miles away back to my machine, and a little later Frank came to refurbish my fire and we chatted a bit, with many a complaint on my part because Frank had had to been all over the plantation today so that coffee had to come by way of Sam Brown, the rascal, who makes me laugh with his perpetual "Yassum, you shoe is right", but who can never take the Frank whom I like so much.

The Madam came right afterward bringing Sister along with her, and with the latter that amazing dyane of energy which at once radiates and enervates. We whirled through a dozen lines of conversation and Sister told of how she had driven Mat away from Almer's cabin when she had found him there cutting wood, with the implication that there was going to be no more sawing of wood continued within the place. A bluejay in the meantime was making a great racket in the tree outside my window, and I thought of the pity of it all, how a bird with such fine feathers and position in the feathered world she occupies could be so busy with dispeeling the nests of others, since the little nests of wood the other birds built and fashion to their liking is none of the bluejay's business.

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January 9th - Tues. continued.

Sister and the Dr. stayed for dinner or rather supper, and a little after six, Aunt Mammie and I sat before the Franklin stove, discussing the peculiarities of each of our "problem children, for each of us has one, ~~although~~ although neither of the ones is of any blood relation to us.

And then we read for a while from Stevenson's Isaac Franklin, Slave Trader and -lanter.

Two or three years ago Aunt Mammie had considerable correspondence with L. S. U. regarding Isaac Franklin. She was curious to know if anything had been written about this man, since she felt there might be something in such a volume about her grandfather, Isaac Erwin, or possibly Joseph Erwin, who was a contemporary, both in Tennessee and in Louisiana of Franklin. As I understand it, a response came through from L. S. U. saying that according to Dr. Stevenson, there never was such a person as Isaac Franklin. It was accordingly a striking line we read last evening in the introduction to his book which said he had been investigating the papers of Isaac Franklin for over a decade. I cannot help but wonder why he should have advised Aunt Mammie that such a person never existed. It is further interesting, too, that in his opening chapter, he gives considerable space to an extremely rare book covering the court records and complete inventory of Aunt Mammie's grandfather's lawsuit. It is thought there are but four of these are in existence and obviously Dr. Stevenson doesn't know of Aunt Mammie's copy.

This naturally brought us around to a discussion of Aunt Mammie's grandfather and a thesis written by some woman on him. When she was compiling her material, someone recommended that she go to his granddaughter for the material. His daughter was also living with Aunt Mammie at the time. But instead of going to such a source, where she could have obtained invaluable personal records as well and the diaries which had been kept by the man himself, this writer went to the Gay family which through some sort of financial manipulations,--perfectly legal but wholly unchristian and without regard for family, had secured the Erwin plantations from the family. I presume the material collected from such a source would give quite a different picture of the subject of the thesis than if the information had come from Melrese.

And so home at nine a trouver await etc ici et parti.



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Jan. 10th - Wednesday.

A subtle dawn, with many gray low hanging clouds to metamorphose night into day without appreciable consciousness of the departure of the one and the arrival of the other.

Frank's feet fall on the gallery hearled coffee time as an eye-opener, and the suggestion of a stimulating cold shower and the removal of my long beard.

I got down to work early and kept banging away until Madam arrived for 10 o'clock coffee, and so on until dinner time.

Then came the mail with literature about swans and news from Berlin and Munich, and a whole flock of newspapers including the "Atchez Democrat with a complete account of the fire that destroyed lovely hemewood. And so back to work until three when Frank arrived with word that the Madam was taking her coffee in the bindery, and so I went over there to chat for a while with her. Henry has a loom set up in the bindery and is weaving a rather special table cover, the loom being so set up as to enable him to weave double, so that while the actual weaving seems to be only three feet wide, when it is completed and unfolded, it will be six feet wide.

It was marvelous to see how the Madam maintains her relationship with the servants, with such a nicety of balance between humor and seriousness, with the slipping of one mood into the other with such adroitness.

A tangle developed in one of the threads and Henry asked the Madam if she had a pin so that he could untangle the snarl easier.

Certainly she had, and she took off the old gold breast pin that she always wears,--it having come to her from her grandmother, and handed it to Henry.

"I couldn't live without that pin, Henry," she remarked. "I always wear it, you know".

"Does you even wear it when you goes to bed, Madam?"

"Of course, I do, Henry,--if there is a button off my nightgown. This morning it was the only thing I had to take out a thorn I ran in my finger while I was working in the garden, and that is the pin I used to pin up old Uncle Israel's jaws when he died. Old Uncle Israel lived in Mr. Saxen's cabin in these days. He had been a slave and he was alone in the house the last two years of his life. He didn't want anyone to be with him, and so I used to have feed sent to him at meal time, and two or three times during the night, I used to take a lamp and go out and see how he was. I learned a lot from Uncle Israel, and when he died late one night, there was no one on the place but me, and so the pin was the only thing I had on me to pin up his jaws."

"Lerdie, Ma'am. I sure wouldn't be dare for dat," was Henry's response.

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Jan. 10th- cont.

"Why, Henry, aren't you ashamed of yourself. Do you mean to say you wouldn't stay by a friend if he was sick?"

"Yassum, I'd stay alright, but Madam, when dat friend had to go, den I'd have to go right away before he did, cause dat shu ain't no place for me at sick times."

"Oh, Henry, don't be so feelish. I think I shall wear that pin when I die and I'm coming back right here and haunt you if you're always going to be so scared of death."

"Oh, no you hain't, Madam, 'cause when you'se gwine, I ain't no'er comin' back to this here place, 'cause I know shu 'nuf dat you'se gwine to be walkin' 'round here alright, and I'se gwine to stay out."

Interesting person, this Henry "ertzeg. Off-spring of Hypelite Herzeg, brother of Miss Sally who lives in Magnolia plantation, his father was of course white and his mother as black as the ace of spades. Henry approaches the genius in many an undertaking, particularly in construction. "He can do anything that hands have done before him". Not many years ago, Aunt Cammie sent him to the loom house to bring a part of a loom to her. He returned to say he couldn't see no loom there. "And so from not even knowing what a loom looks like, Henry now makes looms, invents most complicated devises for their operation and himself weaves the most complicated lay-outs with exquisite skill. I am enchanted that he will work with me on the building for the Bohemian glass.

But the coffee was done, and I had promised myself that I would run over to take Celine some medicine, and so I started out. The gray clouds still dranged along the sky, but obviously there was to be no rain.

I found Celine and Joe both a little under the weather, and we sat for a time before their fireplace, with Celine as usual waving her stick to shoo away the chickens, cats and dogs that cautiously edged in toward the fire from time to time. We chatted local gossip, and somehow conversation turned around to old Joe Henry, grandfather of the present Henry children. During the war it seems that Joe Henry and Jean Louis Ferrault were two of the richest white men in Amptie, some miles from here. Celine's mulatto father, Jim, lived in Amptie, too. "When the Yankee's arrived in that region and were appropriating everything in sight or hidden, Joe Henry and Jean Louis Ferrault consulted Jim about concealing their currency. "Shortly thereafter, the Yankee's came to Jim, telling him that they had heard he had the money of these two men, but Jim said he didn't know anything about that but if the Yanks doubted his word, they had better search his cabin and out buildings to convince themselves. "He did, giving the place a thorough going over.



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Wednesday - Jan. 10th - con.

Time marched on and after a while the War was over and the unsettled conditions dissolved into normalcy again. Then one day, Joe Henry and Jean Louis Terrault called on Jim and asked him how successful he had been in keeping the money for them. Then Jim told them that he had put the money in the house when they had brought it to him, and then gone to the pig-stye, dug a hole deep under it, put the money in the hole and after filling it up, scattered corn on the floor of the stye and then kept a number of pigs in the place ever afterward. And so the pig stye the three of them went, and after digging a bit, they found the entire amount still in tact.

Eline said that Joe Henry was a good man, and that he gave him that place on the bayou, with a good house and all the land that ran all the way back there, and that he never would take any rent or anything from him, and if ever Jim or his family needed anything, Joe Henry always saw that he got it right off.

And about this time the clock struck five, and I realized I had better be running along or I would be late for supper in the big house, and so I said goodbye to Eline, urging her to stay in her straightback chair before the fire and keep warm so she wouldn't catch pneumonia in the top of her head, while old Joe walked out with me to the second gate on the road, there to chat for a few seconds, shake hands with me and say "Aurevoir".

I skirted Main River briskly and hoped to reach home well before supper, having forgotten Elmer was sick and that ita would probably have feed on time. He did.

Supper over, and six o'clock still young, Adam and I took up the reading of the thesis on Joseph "rwin by some woman whose name was possibly White. Except for the fillers in the thesis, the work isn't of much value, save for the hilarious manner in which it is written and the considerable amount of errors which are always good on a half forgotten subject, since these errors act sometimes as a violent stimulant to bring out the truth from numerous sources which would never have been heard from had the article not been written at all. It would seem that Joseph "rwin, the Adam's grandfather, must have been an empire builder. It wasn't long after he had come from Nashville to Louisiana in 1807 that he had plantations that embraced about 31,000 acres, and was probably worth well over a million dollars. In discussing coasts of land at the time, and in giving a rather flowery description of the lower Mississippi, Miss White gave the impression that at one time The Garden of Eden could have been purchased at four dollars an acre. This is my first acquaintance with land values on so remote a real estate venture. There were many a laugh in these lines for the Adam and me, and the reading was doubly interesting because of the numerous hand written notes on the margins of the thesis by both Aunt "ammie and her Aunt. At the point where Joseph "rwin was said to be the richest man in that state at the time, the correction was that he might have been the third.

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Jan. 10th- concluded.

We didn't finish the thesis and I am glad, because it will be a pleasure to anticipate a continuation on the morrow. I suppose then we shall read about his death,--the thesis says by his own hand, but probably by his own feet would be near the truth since through a mis-step on the gallery one evening, it is thought he may have fell into the great water jar, sunken half in the earth at the end of the gallery. There is a possibility, too, that a body servant, whom he had promised freedom on his death, but none of these possibilities were considered by Miss White. It is true that Joseph was in certain financial difficulties at the time, but even so, he was possessed of about three hundred and eighty thousand dollars at the time, so it would appear that he was still a very wealthy man for these times. I believe it is the custom to appraise the money value of the time in terms of today by multiplying the dollar by from five to seven times its present purchasing power, and if this is correct, Joseph was still well within the millionaire class at the time.

As I understand it, Aunt "ammie's grandfather, Isaac, the son of Joseph, had not come to Louisiana when his father, Joseph, did, but being a boy or even at the time of his father's departure for Louisiana, Isaac remained in Nashville,--possibly at Peachblowem the family home there which his father continued to own, and to which he came frequently before his death, riding up the west bank of the Mississippi as far as Baton Rouge, and crossing there and continuing by way of Natchez and Memphis, so that he must have known many people in the "atchez region during these years. I know of no records covering these acquaintances, but possibly they may someday come to light.

Aunt "ammie's father, Isaac, having been married in Nashville, brought his bride and family to Louisiana. There were five children by this marriage. After his first died, Isaac married a second time, the bride being only 15, and by this union there were 10 more children, of which Aunt "ammie's mother, Miss Leudevine, was one, having been born in 1840 and living until 1935.

It's a pleasure to go over these facts with Aunt "ammie, there are so many little details that they recall to her mind. One that I liked was that Isaac gave his wife a thousand dollars on two different Christmases in order that she might buy herself a good seamstress, but according to Miss Leudevine, her mother never did use the money for that purpose. That grandmother must have been a remarkable woman, having been married to a man with five children at the age of 15, and begetting herself ten more children, operating the household with success, and always curious to learn more and more of the important things in life, so much so that one of her sons was always reading to her no matter at what household task she might be employed. I liked the story, too, that Isaac purchased a marble tombstone for his first wife, and for some reason stored it in the house before having



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Jen. 10th concluded.

until a suitable time came to have it erected. Every year when wife no. 2 was superintending the house cleaning, she always was having to contend with this cumbersome object. She prayed her husband time and again to have the monument properly set in the place intended for it, ~~for~~ or for which it was intended, but some how the time slipped by until another cleaning, and so the whole performance had to be gone through with again, so that finally in desperation, wife No. 2 took the matter in her own hands and saw to it that Wife No. 1. actually received the tombstone that had been purchase for her so many years back.

But this day's Journal seems to be long out of hand, and so I shall merely add that at eight I went home. From Celine and others I had learned that there had been a death in the

neighborhood last night, and tonight the cabin will be checked with people attending the wake. Isn't it curious how frightened these people are of death and yet how ready they are to attend an evening of festivity as soon as the body is cold. I shall have to get more particulars on this point tomorrow.

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Jan. 11th - Thursday.

Amazing weather for Winter. The radio mentions 70 degrees, and I believe it. At six o'clock Grandpa - Uncle "Whitefoot's" new name, -- Grandpa and I took a short walk to the far end of the garden and back, with me in slippers and bathrobe and Grandpa with nothing on at all, giving a vague idea of what Louisiana can do for folks in "inter if she wants to.

The "Adam came over at ten for coffee, and we made a little tour of the garden afterward to see what was going on in the floral department and to round up some men to cut down a tree.

Sam Brown, Bud Williams, ~~xxxx~~ Mitchell, Irwin and Bluff dropped their pruning knives, spades and what not, while Madam gave instructions as to how the deed was to be accomplished. In the first place, the tree itself had a trunk about a foot through, and from this spread a few limbs which were to be cut off first.

"Yassum, you're right, "Miss Henry", warbled Sam Brown both before and after every observation from the Madam. After some contemplation of the problem, a long rope was attached to one limb, and Irwin was sent scurrying to get a crate to protect a small magnolia that grew nearby.

"Oh, yassum, Miss Henry, you shoo am right, Miss Henry, we gwine be careful. We don't need no crate, 'cause we gwine pull the limb dis way, Ma'am."

"Well, put the crate over the magnolia anyway, Sam Brown".

"Yassum, you shoo is right Miss Henry, but we ain't gwine to come nowhere nears dat magnolia."

And so the crate was placed, two or three men tied the rope and held to it, while Mitchell swung a mean axe with telling blows. A half dozen strokes and the limb let go, and of course everybody was so excited by then that it crashed plumb on the crate that guarded the magnolia, smashing it good.

"Now, you see, Sam Brown what I told you?"

"Yassum, Miss Henry, you shoo am right but you sees dat magnolia ain't hurt none, cause de crate done step it."

And so, the five husky blacks attacking her, the poor tree eventually succumbed. I wonder what size force would be needed if with such a marshalling of forces for a small tree is need, just how many it would take to get somewhere with a California red wood.



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Jan. 11th - cont.

Dinner came and went, but I am uncertain just how, for peer Elmer certainly succeeded in serving everything in such a hopeless manner that it would have been annoying if it hadn't been such a perfect success of mis-adventures that the whole business was ~~xx~~ hilarious. I must say the soup wasn't bad, but from that point on it was merely a question of eating to keep one's self alive. The corn bread was flat and soggy, the beans floated in an ocean of water, the steak had been cooked as a roast, the gravy was like consommé and the greens were so filled with pepper that they'd make "you beat your mammy. Egg-plant was on the menu, too, but peer Elmer forgot it completely until supper time, so that might as well be counted out as a loss.

The Madam's patience at such times is magnificent. Never once have I heard her raise her voice, and always after advising Elmer as to what is wrong with any particular, she resumes her by admonishing her to get it right next time, because "that's your job", but after Elmer has returned to the Kitchen, the Madam turns to me and says: "I honestly don't believe she's ever going to make it. After all, I suppose we mustn't expect it of her, for the good Lord didn't give her brains to understand what it is all about.

We ran through the mail, which was light, and the Adam returned to the garden to superintend the digging of crepe myrtles and other shrubs which Dan is planting on the Cain River side of his proposed camp. For my part, I took a walk down past Cain River bridge, and along the river as far as the church, passing around to the back to wander for a bit through the graveyard. As I stepped in the gate, I came to a full halt, confronted by a big black cow and a second smaller one.

Over to one side a group of mulattoes were fussing around the grave where the service for Madame Balthazar was to be held at three o'clock. Seeing me stop so abruptly, they called to me saying that the cow wouldn't harm me. I felt like saying that cow has already floored me by her mere presence in the graveyard.

And so I talked with the people a bit, sheered the two bessies over some tombs, and in amazement at this sacrilege of the place, returned home for coffee. When Frank came with my tray, I asked him how it was that two cows should be in that fenced off graveyard. He told me that the sisters in the convent adjoing the church put their cows in there and that Father Kelly who lives on the opposite side of the church used to keep a flock of sheep in there. But this all seemed very strange to me and so I said that I thought the reverend father and sisters complained because not all the people came on All Saints Day to decorate the

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Jan. 11th - con.

graves. He said that that was quite true, the priest and sisters wanted the folks to decorate the graves on All Saints and as soon as the day was over, the church people,--sisters and priests, turned their cattle into the place, for sometimes there was good grass growing on the graves, and usually there were some flowers and weeds that the cattle liked.

"But what do the priests and sisters think about the cows knocking down the tombstones?" I ask.

"Oh, they don't pay that no mind" was his answer.

Well, there's only one thing I have to observe, and that's from Isaac Erwin, or possibly Aunt Ammie:

"That certainly takes the rag off the bush."

And so on to supper, which last night we had promptly at five under Rita's direction, but tonight it is different under Elmer's panic. We supped promptly at six, and everything was as completely array as it had been at dinner.

For a couple of hours afterward, the Adam and I read from Miss White's Joseph Erwin

and so home at eight, with the Adam reading until after ten I guess, since I noticed her light when I let grandpa out.



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Jan. 12th - Friday.

Before he had left last evening, Frank had built me one of his usually fine fires, but the heat of the day continued all night so that the fire became important merely for decorative purposes, and this morning the sky was still overcast with gray clouds which seemed uncertain in their own mind whether they should open up to showers or give way to blue sky.

The Madam was going to Leutierville to bring the baby to spend the day with her at Melrose, and so I met her in the library, and together we traveled as far as Derry together. I got out there to call on Mrs. Murphy who has charge of the T. and P. railroad station there, -- Madam having already dropped off a variety of plants and bushes at Mrs. Murphy's home on our way down.

The morning trains had passed through Derry, and Mrs. Murphy was along to talk with me, and I immediately recognized her happiness in having someone on whose shoulder she could weep.

After introducing myself to her, I just stood firm while she pierced the dykes. Her office was spick and span, but a little barren and some depressing cove of the telegraph drenched wearily by the window. Mrs. Murphy's voice quavered almost as soon as I had explained who I was, and in a second or two, she just let down the bars and wept. Last evening, it seems, her pet cat had been killed by an automobile. It seems she had had the cat for some time and "it was almost human". All night she had prayed, and it was only recently that she had got back on her feet after a long spell of being worn out, but now, of course, all her gains had come to naught, for the cat was dead. It just seemed as though she couldn't stand it. A little while ago her sister or sister-in-law had told her that it wasn't right for anyone to love an animal the way she loved that cat and that she could be sure that God would punish her for it, too. And now God had punished her, and she just didn't know how she was ever going to get over it, and after praying all night she didn't feel a bit better, and this morning her husband, who works in another station of the T. and P. told her that he knew how she felt and he was all broke up too but they still had a kitten of the departed darling, but she didn't think she wanted to keep it because it wasn't her own cat that she loved so much and the kitten would only remind her of its mother and she would never like it half so much, etc. etc. ad infinitum.

Well, I dried her tears as best I could, and beat a retreat as fast as I could before my words of sympathy should uncork another torrent, and so I walked down the big road toward Leutierville until the car came along, and then took the Madam the baby and me back to Melrose.

Mid-morning coffee, and we examined the Claiborne's Mississippi history of Mrs. Moore's which she had sent to us, its binding all to pieces, where upon Aunt Mammie had sent it to the old man in Dallas who had restored it beautifully and returned it in its original binding.

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Jan. 12th - cont.

Dinner came -- and it was really quite good today. Perhaps all of Elmer's tragedies were concentrated in yesterday's so that today's escaped any.

After going over the mail, I came over to my maisonette, and shortly afterward Henry called to look at one of the sofas which needs to have a leg tightened.

As he was leaving, the Madam x dashed in to tell me of a telephone conversation she had just held with the Watchiteches Chamber of Commerce. It seems that the President of the Chamber telephoned her several times this morning, asking that she call back. On her return from Leutierville she did attempt to establish contact with the Chamber three times, but found the line always busy. But just now she had gotten the call through, and the Chamber told her that a Mrs. Edith Wyatt Moore of Natchez, Mississippi, was to speak at the Normal on January 23rd, and would Mrs. Henry entertain her. Mrs. Henry said she would be delighted to do so, -- and then flew over to tell me the good news. Although Mrs. Moore has been promising to come to stay at Melrose for a month in January, we haven't been able to get any definite date out of her, and she left for Chicago on the 10th without saying when she would arrive. After all, the month is getting along, but if we are to trust the Chamber of Commerce, I guess she will actually get here. It's curious how news gets from Edith Wyatt Moore to Melrose, I must say.

Supper eventually arrived, and the Leutierville family joined the board. I had thought that Frank had gone home hours ago when I went up stairs about seven, but it seems he had been tending baby, although he had hoped to leave early, since it was his wife's 26th birthday. Poor Frank, always so faithful, always so even in spirit and consideration. It is no wonder that everyone who pretends to have a heart loves Frank.

And then, after the household was alone, except for the Madam and me, we read notes of Jesse H. Erwin until eight, -- and hence to my little maisonette and to sleep.



January 13th, - Saturday 1940.

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A beautiful dawn and something akin to spring in the air. I arose early, and was in the road before seven, with a anticipation of sunrise spreading smoothly over the mirror-like surface of Cane River.

Half way to "ontrose, the car from the Plantation garage came along, and a couple of the mulatto boys asked me if I cared to ride. I always accept because it's a pleasure to chat with them a little, and I can always walk back if I don't always walk from the starting point. I rode for fifteen miles or so, and then started back, but on the way another car stopped, and as it was the coal-black youth from "ontrose Mills who had sheltered me at Christmas time, I climbed and rode back partway with him. After saying goodbye to him, I walked for a couple of miles more and then another car stopped, and it was the same man who had given me a ride on the same day that the "ontrose Mills youth had late in 1939, and so I got in and rode with him. I hope when I really want to catch a ride some time I may be as successful as when I am not so pressed for leisure.

Arriving home, the Madam and I had ten o'clock coffee together, and looked over what the gardeners were up to before the dinner bell rang. I am sorry that the "adam has to entertain the baby once a week or so, for it obviously tires her more than she will permit herself to recognize. It's astonishing, however, that no matter how exhausted she may be, her spirit and good nature is as buoyant as ever. Only the face betrays what the spirit successfully conceals.

Dinner and the mail, with a couple of good pieces from from the States and another from the islands that no one could

read, and so out into the garden to fuss around the japonicas and sweet olive which are doing a gigantic business in the warm heavy air that is more like early June than the middle of January. I refurbished my flowers, -- a good bunch of blue hyacinthes in the midst of a great white japonica which Aunt "amie had brought me, and the early American glass vase with a imposing array of narcissus, which made the inside of the house rival the gallery where the sweet olive hangs a veil of perfume which is a joy to cut through everytime one steps in or out.

About four, after having finished up my work for the week, I joined Madam in her room for a little chat. The weather was so warm that no fire was going in the Franklin stove, and the gentle movement of air from the open windows and doors was heavy with the fragrance and earthy pungency of Spring. About five we heard foot-steps on the back gallery. Robina and Miss Nellie had arrived from Shreveport for last week's snow storm in north Louisiana had been forgotten and now we could enjoy the week-end which last week's storm had prevented.

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Jna. 13th - St. "oncluded.

It would be difficult to say which of us, The "adam, Frank or I, was the happier to have Robina and Miss "ellie back, for to each of us they represent so much that is important to us in making life more so.

Supper was more lively than usual, what with all the political discussion as to which candidates were going to get the most votes in different localities, with a constant vein ~~xxxx~~ running through the conversation that sounded the hope Sam "ones would beat Earl Long.

Supper done, Robina came over to my house, and it was pleasant to stroll through the cloud-banks of sweet olive that the balmy air spread in great thick layers on the breeze. It seems so curious that summer nights should obtain in mid-January calendars.

We read mail together, and when Aunt "amie and Miss Nellie joined us, we looked over books on "atchez and discussed a million gossips covering both sides of the Mississippi until nine o'clock.

It was pleasant to walk back to the big house with the ladies and breath the thick, warm perfumed air and remark upon the brilliancy of the stars in the gray-blue heavens.

At nine-thirty I was in bed, kicking off the covers, it was so warm. But five minutes later I was amazed to hear a great gust of wind, and a moment later to start up in surprise when the great Markoe door on the front gallery banged shut, and torrents of rain began to descend. In another ten minutes, I was retrieving my discarded covers, and hoping against hope that the little building I was thinking of in South Louisiana would not be blown down by this infant tornado. "nd so off to sleep.



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Jan7ary 14th, - Sunday.

Aunt 'ammie's birthday. Sister vontenteers that she is 69. How wonderful to know someone whose enthusiasm and endless variety of interests has so eschewed time and somehow made her as ageless as a spring of pure water, welling up from inn inexhaustable sources that bring a constant refreshment and vitality to those who know and love her and to those who never have seen her but have never-the-less drawn from this marvelous fountain.

It was cold and clear when I awoke at dawn. It seems that yesterday's summer has flown as completely as last night's storm, leaving brisk air, sunshine and a perfect October-like day in its wake.

A little after nige, hurried steps sounded on my gallery.--it was the Madam and 'obina racing to see which one would arrive first. We had a hurried little chat together, and then the 'adam left to attend to numerous little duties, while 'obina stayed, for we had much to chat about.

At ten the Madam returned, bringing Miss 'ellie with her, and the four of us had coffee together, talking the while about the sudden change in the weather, my fear of disaster to my pet project, and ended with Aunt 'ammie trying to persuade 'obina to give up her determination to return to 'hreveport in the morning, but on the contrary, take the day off and make the trip with us to south Louisiana. 'obina said she simply couldn't. And then there was some additional talk about roly-pollies, a little elongated sack filled with sand to lay against the thresh-hold of doors to keep out wintry breezes such as we are having today. Aunt 'ammie is going to make one for 'obina.

And then the 'adam and 'Miss 'ellie flew out, leaving 'obina and me for more talk until noon, when we joined the family in the big house for dinner.

About two, 'obina and I braved the breezes to make a little tour of the cotton feild behind the 'frican House where we want to dig the lake and build the house of Bohemian glass. Sister and the Dr. and the baby wanted the Madam to run up to Carolyn Dorman's but the wind was too strong, and I must say that all the excitement of household cares made the Madam show signs of physical fatigue, although her spirit never wavered.

'obina and I returned to my house for coffee and a little later drove over to see 'eline, finding her troubled with her rheumatism so badly that she had diff culty in walking.--but in spite of it, always ready to laugh and be gay., never revealing any mental fatigue after 86 years of a busy, simple life, brimming over with charities for a variety of less fortunate people. We saw Joe, too, and one or two of the little boys these two kind old people are sheltering.

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January 14th - continued.

Twilight settled over Cane River before we returned home, a marvelous clear sunset, as lucid as a 'renaissance canvas. With all the servants away for their 'unday afternoon and evening, we enjoyed our usual cold 'unday evening supper, with a hot dish in the form of gravy that was simmering on the hearth, and cold salade, vegetables, salade of jelly and sales of vegabables, cold meats and what not.

After sister and her family had left, the Madam, 'obina, Miss Nellie and I sat long before the 'Franklin stove, talking much of old clocks, Natchez coings and what not. About eight o'clock, the Madam brought up the question of 'obina making an expedition with us on the morrow to south Louisiana. As the matter had been settled in the morning, I paid little attention as to results that might be obtained from Aunt 'ammie's persuasion, when, to my surprise, 'obina finally succumbed, saying that on second thought she thought perhaps she could arrange it if she could get in touch with her associate in business, Nell 'ish, in 'hreveport.

I am not sure whether 'obina, Aunt 'ammie, Miss Nellie or I were the more amazed at Aunt 'ammie's successs, and it was magnificent to see the Madam clear the decks for action, getting Nell 'ish on the long distance, and wrapping everything up with an enthusiasm and perission that somehow entirely blotted out all the cares that had set on her brow during the day.

It had been decided that we would take Henry 'ettzog with us on our expedition, for the stong arm and apitutde of a genius is always a good asset when undertaking any attempt to stave off obliteration. Henry had gones away on Saturday evening.--someplace a hundred miles or so, to visit relatives, and we knew he expected to return on the Sunday night train that arrives about eight. 'obina and I accordingly left Aunt 'ammie and Miss 'ellie to finish details of the household for the morrow, while we jumped into 'obina's car and dove madly down to Derry to meet the train bringing Henry to tell him that we would leave on our expedition at six in the morn-ing. It was as clear as a crystal, that beautiful cool blue night, with a little crescent moon being out-shone by some astonishingly brilliant stars. The ride along Cane River was glorious, the mirror surface, aglow with a carpet of sparklets that rivaled the Heavens. The lights of the station at Derry were out, and only a vague light burned in a dingy store across the tracks. I went in to see if there was anyone w o could tell me about the train, and there in a barn-like bar, some men were standing around in over-coats, doing nothing especially, and giving a weird aspect to the whole curious building. They told me the train had already come and gone.

So back up the road we flew, stopping at 'enry's cabin to ask for him, but finding only his wife who told us he had returned but that he was up toward Montrose at the moment. And so we told her to give him the message and that we would be looking for him at the big house at six in the morning.



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Jan. 14th - cont.

And so back to Melrose, but not stopping because we remembered that probably Frank would like to know of our early departure, so that he could bring us coffee before we left and at the same time receive the keys to the armoirs and final instructions from the Madam who always leaves him in "full charge", although Miss Nellie in reality would be the head of the institution on the morrow. But Frank is such a faithful servant that without a final word from the Madam, his day would not be happy, and so we drove on beyond Melrose, stopping at the edge of the cotton field, at the far end of which Frank's cabin perched on the bank of the river. There was still a light in the house, and his wife was up, and opened the door for me. Frank had already retired, but as the three beds of the family are all in the one large room of the cabin, serving as living room, dining room and bed room, Frank was there to receive me, too, although he was already in bed. The severity of the room made a very strong impression on me, for all I noticed was the three beds, a chair, a radio and an oil lamp.

Frank was surprised and delighted to see me, and when I told him of our plans to leave so early in the morning, he was doubly glad that I had told him because he certainly wanted to be at the big house to bring us our breakfast and get us started.

And so goodnight to Frank and his wife, back across the cotton field where Robina was waiting in the car and so to Melrose where, as we turned in, we noticed J. H. was standing in front of his house, in his shirt sleeves, talking with someone. "I wonder what's going on" we both remarked.

Back to Aunt Sammie's room, we found everything in order for the morrow, and she was delighted at the finishing touch we had put on in letting Frank know. During our absence, it seems, Bill, who runs the saloon, had been driving along the Montrose lane when his car had passed over a white man lying in the rut. The car had ~~it~~ killed the man. That's why J. H. had been out in his shirtsleeves talking with someone.

We talked a little of this tragedy, of tomorrow's plans, and so eventually everyone said good night. At home I went to bed immediately in anticipation of a busy day on the morrow, but couldn't sleep very well, having constantly in my mind the gorgeous picture of the Madam's superb marshalling of forces and complete domination of the tiredness that would have floored anyone else.

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January 15th - Monday.

I awoke at five o'clock and was enchanted to contemplate the day ahead of me which would take us over several hundred miles and which I hoped would accomplish much in the way of rescuing a treasure from destruction.

Frank arrived shortly with coffee, and after his usual cheery good morning said:

"You sure is going to be disappointed 'cause dey telephoned from Shreveport last that Miss Nellie's uncle died at mid-night, so 'iss Robina has to go back to Shreveport this morning, so you ain't goin' to make the trip".

I nearly fell out of bed.

"But, Frank", I gasped, "I didn't know that Miss Nellie had an uncle in the first place and in the second place why does Miss Robina have to go back to Shreveport. Why can't Fugabou take Miss Nellie and let Miss Robina go with us?"

But Frank didn't know, and so he went back to the big house and asked the Madam about it, and neither she ~~xx~~ nor Robina could think what ~~xxxxxxxx~~ Fugabou had to do about it. A little later Frank returned, saying that he had mis-understood. It wasn't Miss Nellie's uncle ~~xxxx~~ who had died but rather Miss Nell Fish's uncle, so that Robina had to return to take care of the office.

And so I got up and fiddled about until six-thirty when Robina came for her golashes, already to start. She was of course very disappointed, as we all naturally might have been expected to be, but the weather was auspicious for a ride back to Shreveport, which was something, and so I jumped in her car with her and rode as far as Montrose, - two or three miles,--talking the while of the exciting evening before and how strangely Fate could give mere man's plans a twist.

It was grand to have this little morning ride together, and after saying goodbye, she headed north while I came back down the lane, arriving in time for a seven thrity breakfast which Frank was just preparing for me.

Miss Nellie came over at nine, and we started working on Mrs. Moore's big parcel of Natchez historical notes, glancing through them, and assorting them for filing.

At eleven-thirty, I took my mail to the store and then walked down to the saloon to see Bill and learn how things were going in relation to last night's death on the highway.

From him and from Celest, I pieced this story together. About the time Robina and I had started for Perry last night, J. H.



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and Celeste were driving home along the lane from Montrose to Melrose when they came upon a car in the middle of the road from which two men and two women,--the latter much darker than the former had just descended. It was apparent that Joe Chevalier had been drinking, and I believe the car was his, but whether he or Bill had been driving nobody knew. The two women were very excited. It was curious that the car which had run over the man was between J. H.'s car and the body, although both cars had been headed in the same direction. Celeste asked about this curious coincidence and one of the women said excitedly that they had run over something, didn't know what it was, and so had backed up to discover that it was a body. I understand that the car, therefore, must have passed over the body twice. Joe turned the man over, and gasped: "My God, he is white". For a white man's death to be caused by a man of color is very serious in this section. The body was covered with blood, and the man was still breathing. They rushed him to Natchitoches hospital, but he died shortly after his arrival. Everyone agreed that the man must have been wholly intoxicated and had fallen in the rut and gone to sleep. He was some one of little standing in Montrose where he worked in the mill.

And so, the set-up being as it was, Bill was not arrested. He took care of funeral arrangements for the relatives of the man, and I suppose through Melrose influence, no charges were brought and the matter was closed.

Back home for dinner and the mail, which was heavy, with many packages from New York which delighted me much.

All afternoon, Miss Nellie went over the Moore notes with me, and at five, we both joined the Madam at the big house for supper.

Then we adjourned to the Franklin fireside, and read from the unpublished McGruder Diary, more pages of which Mobina had brought with her. I like it much for it has a running account of the doings in the Dunbar home near Natchez, Mississippi about 1850, and I like it twice as much because of the asides which Aunt Vammie reads into it as she goes along.

And so our day closed with much less excitement and much less travel than I had anticipated, but with unquenched admiration for Aunt Vammie and her marvelous spirits which never falter, no matter how disappointed she may be in the unexpected foiling of aspirations she may hold as settled at the moment, and for her faith and determination to carry on with anything that is good, without ever losing sight of the fact that if one day it is delayed, on another it will be accomplished.

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January 16th  
Tuesday

Up early and enchanted at the continued moderation of the weather and the promise of another fine day.

While enjoying breakfast I tried to get a little news, which I could find only in Atlanta, Nashville or Texas stations, as all the Louisiana stations were bought up by the various political parties of the State which is today voting for five or six candidates who are running for Governor.

Frank came over giggling, saying: "They sure done got the Madam out a bed early dis mornin'. J. H. done tell her dey all has to vote before haf pas eight, and she sure am up and not wantin' to botner wid sich foolishness."

Miss Nellie came over at nine and he continued our exploration of the Moore Natchez notes until eleven.

The I jumped on my typewriter and batted off a letter,--or tried to, for I had promised that I would get off a letter to Lyle, and I had missed the mail yesterday, what with all the other work we had on hand. But today's efforts seemed doomed, too, for one visitor after another came in, including Bluff who wanted to borrow of all things, the key to my clock, so he could take care of some of the others on the place. I didn't notice until much later that he had succeeded in stopping the pendulum of mine while getting the key, and so as a result, no one got any mail today.

And so to dinner, and Charles Hazerette was here, and after the others had left, he and the Madam and Miss Nellie and I talked over demi-tasse, and later Charles came over to see me and some of my photographs, particularly the one of Archibald Tutledge's plantation house, Hampton on the Santee, 60 miles north of Charleston, South Carolina, which Christian and I had taken a year or so back when we were there.

Miss Nellie and I worked all afternoon, with only the coffee hour to interrupt us. Sam Brown is toasting the tray this afternoon. I wonder what has happened to Frank. He didn't serve coffee this morning as he was getting his son off on the morning train for New Orleans. I suppose he is attending to things in the lot this afternoon, as he sometimes has to.

Supper, rather dull, but always satisfying with the promise of reading before the Madam's fire with her and Miss Nellie after the rest of the household has disposed of itself here and there. Tonight everyone has gone to Natchitoches to hear the election returns, so the house is doubly quiet.

Tonight we shared articles, Miss Nellie having read an article which we hadn't in the reader's Digest. It was about raising turkeys in Wellman, Iowa. I was delighted with this article concerning



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concerning the success this co-operative group has had with turkeys, and it was made twice as good by interesting particulars the "adam" had to give on the subject. "he told of us of the "urkey "ort her Grand-mother had had in south Louisiana,--a group of high polls on the top of which ~~xx~~ perches were constructed for the turkeys, with a kind of stockade built around the base of the polls to keep marauders away. There was much, too, about "unt "ammie's attempt at raising these delicate animals, or should I say fowls, their habit of laying just enough eggs that they can cover at setting time, the susceptible nature of the eggs which ay be ruined by thunder,--unless as the darkies say, "you put two nails, crossed, in each nest", and how "unt "ammie had started with two turkeys and had succeeded in raising t rity, and then never tried it again, since success in this line is not likely to be repeated,, etc., etc. "nd so of course the e nversation got off on the time "unt "ammie tried to hatch the alligator eggs which she had brought home from her aigrette expedition, and how she had sprinkled them several times a day, but how the sprinkling didn't seem to result in anything like what the parent alligator could accomplish., and from that on to the time when due to some excitement, a hen setting on eggs had become separated from the nest, and how "yle and Carolyn had gone out to the roost and captured just any chicken and put it on the nest, thinking the bird would keep the eggs warm, but never dreaming that the poor fowl, who wasn't in the mood for setting, would just stand up on them all night long.

And then we re-read the "rehibald "utledge article "A Dark Business" which Miss "ellie hadn't read, and of course were enchanted with the whole article, and his statement regarding the necessity of human touch in relation to employer and employee as concerns the plantation negro.

And this of course was redolent with personal observations from the "adam's personal experiences with her negroes, and of these I must make note elsewhere. And so to bed.

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January 17th - Wednesday.

Another beautiful day, although the radio reports cold weather in the offing.

In spite of the blue sky and sunshine, however, I wish that there might be a little more sun in Frank's face, for while always as outwardly cheerful, I sense a depression of some kind. Possibly it is because he misses his son who left for New Orleans yesterday.

Miss Nellie came over at nine and we worked until eleven when I succeeded in getting off a little mail, but not too much.

A little after eleven, "unt "ammie came over, and Celeste came too. It seems that she and J. A. are leaving for Mexico City tomorrow. This obviously opens the way for the Madam and me to get in the big road. A little before twelve, I went over to the loom house to see "enry, and ask him if he was all set for tomorrow if we should plan to start out. He said was but that we would have to pick him up, as he had come here at six o'clock on Monday morning, and didn't believe we were really getting under way until he saw us. He told the "adam, too, that he had to have someone get him up, too, and have his coffee, so the "adam, unbeknown to him, sent his father-in-law some money and told him to see to it that he arrived at Henry's early on the morrow, built him a good fire and made him coffee. Henry will get a surprise when that happens.

Dinner came and afterward the mail which was good. I am embarrassed because I am so far behind with mine. I learned, too, that Frank's boy had left on yesterday's train from Montrose, but had gotten off at the first stop, "erry, and gone to see his mother who lives there with a black man. Heaven knows what happened to the five dollar ticket Frank had purchased for him after buying the money from J. A. No wonder poor Frank seems a little shaky, for he has obviously had a couple of drinks, and he can't stand them. I wonder why such a nice fellow has to have such a time with his family.

Miss "ellie and I continued our work all afternoon, with the Madam busy as a bee lining things up for tomorrow activities while we are away. Miss Nellie will be here while the "adam and I will travel with "enry and "ugabou. The weather looks a little unsettled this evening. I hope it doesn't get too cold.

Supper done, we read as usual before the "ranklin stove from the "eGruder "iary. Because we were going away tomorrow, we stayed up later than usual, and after I said goodnight, I listened a bit to the radio, for it was an excellent medium to quiet the exciting thoughts that ran through my mind as I contemplated the work we had cut out before us on the morrow. And so to sleep.



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January 18th, 1940 - Thursday.

A little after five I heard Frank's faithful tread on the gallery. I couldn't restrain a fleeting question: Can there be any Miss "ellie's" uneles to put a crimp in today's project?

But the question was removed when I heard Frank's good morning, for just the tone told me that the schedule would be maintained.

While I was drinking my Louisiana coffee and Frank was building my fire, we chatted as usual. It seems that the Madam is feeling fine and will be ready to start about six, and that we are foregoing breakfast until later in the morning when we shall pick something up on the road. Frank said that the weather was warm and that it might be a pretty day, although it was still night outside.

About six, I heard the Madam's step on the gallery, and in she came, already to start, bubbling over with good cheer and inevitably radiating an enthusiasm that is one of her very special attributes. She looked grand, too, in her long black coat, her hair as always looking magnificent in its classic simplicity of arrangement. She wore no hat.

Fugabou, our driver was awaiting us at the side gate, and we didn't hesitate in entering the car as a slight drizzle promised a dampish day. The Madam had raised Fugabou, as he is a Melrose mulatto, but of a darker skin than many of them. He has driven a lot for Aunt "ammie, and possibly from her he has gained that heart-melting tonal quality in his voice and easy laughter that gives him an undisputed claim to everyone's affection.

And so we headed down the road along Cane River, stopping for a moment at Henry Hertzog's cabin to pick him up, and a moment after we were on our way again. It still sprinkled, but dawn was breaking evenly across the leaden skies, save in the East where a jumble of cloud commotion glowed a curious snad-stone red for a time and then toned down to a regulation rain-cloud gray.

It was raining pretty hard when we passed the plantation road that ran away toward the old Robert McAlpin place where Uncle Tom's Cabin had stood, by by "r. Seruggs house where "arriet Beecher Stowe had gone to stay while writing the cruelty of her cousin, McAlpin, made life too unbearable on his plantation, and so on by "onette's Ferry, with the rain ceasing by the time we reached Alexandria where we had breakfast.

It is always such a pleasure to be with the Madam on such trips, she is always in such excellent form, knows so many fascinating tales about the plantations and people who live in them which she remarks upon as we pass by. About half way between Alexandria and New Roads, we stopped at a filling station for a few minutes. Fugabou and Henry who were sitting in the front seats, decided that

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decided it would be an opportunity to stop at the rest room. Just after they quitted the car, a rather unpleasant attendant of the station rushed up to the car, saying, "Isn't your driver colored?"

Fugabou was driving, and we said of course he was, and so to our amusement, he ran after Fugabou and told him he couldn't use the rest room, while there was no objection made to Henry's use of it, for while Henry is a mulatto, having had a white father and a black mother, a wife as black as the ace of spades and a child of deep chocolate, in spite of his swarthy complexion, he frequently, as in the present instance, passes easily enough for a white. Perhaps it is the blue of his eyes, his Aryan features or the snap appraisal of the observer, for Henry himself would certainly never dream of telling anyone he was either white or colored.

And so with Henry refreshed, and Fugabou not, we continued on our journey. The thermometer must have been dropping rapidly, for clouds of mists were beginning to appear, and the air did seem a bit chilly. We were now approaching the region where Aunt "ammie's grandfather Joseph "rwin had come in 1807, to build his great plantation and financial empire that ran into thousand and thousands of acres, making him one of the three richest men in Louisiana, and where Aunt "ammie's father, "ssac "rwin,--her grandfather, rather, built the magnificent home on Bayou Grosse-Tete. It is easy enough to understand how to her Melrose must seem to be a foreign land.

It was along about this time that Fugabou spoke of his vast enthusiasm for the "ississippi "iver, and how the first time he had been on its banks, while driving the "adam and Carolyn "orman, he had worn "de sweetest little shiny black patent leather slippers" he had ever had, and how a little swell in "ole Miss" had dampened his precious little slippers so that they never shined again.

The mist was increasing steadily and the weather was growing colder when at noon we reached our destination. It was an inspiration to notice how everyone undertook a definite part of the task to perform, the "adam marshalling her efficient forces on the one side while Henry, Fugabou and I worked like beavers uninterruptedly for two straight hours without a let up. It was really cold when we were done, and ice was beginning to form on the leaves and twigs. It was time for us to be moving, for our job was completed, and a sleet was starting to come down in earnest.

"anks to the "adam's efficiency, everything was in order and we drove away, shivering with the cold but filled with so much satisfaction over the successful completion of our mission that the atmospheric conditions didn't register appreciably.

We had thought of returning to Melrose by way of Natchez, and in spite of the sleet, now fast turning to snow, we determined to carry out this plan. The drive was a long and cold one, for the ice formed so rapidly on the windshield that the whipper stalled, and ~~xxxx~~ Fugabou had to keep the front window down and rub off the ice as it started to form so that we could see through the pelting sleet and snow.



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At Woodville we were forced to stop entirely, for driving was impossible because of the quick forming sheet of ice over the windshield. And so we purchased some onions and glycerine, either one of which would have been adequate to keep the ice from forming. With this simple application, we headed toward Natchez. I have traveled the road many a time, but more often in a blistering August sun than in a freezing January blizzard. I was delighted at this opportunity to witness a phenomenon, for such it is in this locality.

What with the material we had with us and the imperfect vision through the cloudy windows, we caught only occasional glimpses of the country side, but this was enough. Former cotton fields, now black with the stubble of last year's crop, was wrapped in a blanket of white, quite different in material values from its burden of a few months back, for again the rows were white, but this time it was white feathers from seagulls rather than white-gold from the Mississippi soil.

As we approached the Natchez traces, they seemed more eerie and I had ever imagined possible, this curious tweed mixture of brown lush soil and a granulation and little drifts of snow. Dunleith, with its stately white colonnade running around four sides of the house, looked more pure than ever, and more snowy in itself, thanks to its extraordinary drapery of white on white.

It was nearly five o'clock now, and so we decided to stop for warm food in Natchez. Our favorite restaurant is on the Main Street, in the block which slants sharply toward the Mississippi. The Madam and I descended where Fugabou could best park, which was several doors below our shop. It had been thrilling to see Natchez under snow, but it was exciting to negotiate the little hill over a sidewalk that was a sheet of ice. Shuffling along at a snail's pace, and searching out every little cluster of snow we could find, we finally made it. We ordered a tray sent down to Fugabou and Henry while we ate. Later Fugabou had fun telling us how the poor boy with the tray and walked out of the shop gingerly, only to discover to his dismay shortly afterwards that his feet were where his head should have been and his tray just wasn't.

The Adam, still hatless in the snow, but still as game as ever, brightened with warm food as did I, and within half an hour or less we were on our way again. The embankments of the Mississippi, like everything else in that neighborhood by that time were a glare of ice, and so our descent toward the Ferry was guarded and slow. We just missed a Ferry, too, and so we waited a long time in Natchez-under-the-Hill. And our wait wasn't dull, even though it was cold. The evil old houses of steamboat days looked twice as evil and weatherbeaten in their new trappings of snow, and the spectacle of children and grown-ups, trying to move along the street without sliding on their faces was as compelling to one's attention as was Fugabou's remarks provoking to one's sense of mirth.

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It was dark when we were at last on the Ferry, but that had its good points, too, in spite of the cold, for the city on the bluffs was blanketed in a manner few visitors have ever seen, and the dull gray of the river seemed doubly dark and mighty in its vast canal of whitened levies and bluffs, while the gaiety and brilliance of the shore lights, and the giant flood lights that marked the construction work on the new bridge, took on a luster that beggared the starless skies.

And so across the river, and back into Louisiana, with another 180 miles between us and Melrose. We were all pretty cold, and the snow continued to fall. Once I thought of falling to sleep, hoping that the Adam and I might obliterate a little of the long journey in that manner, but instinct told me that Fugabou and Henry were making a wrong turn, and so I kept awake. But after a time, both the Adam and I "rested our eyes, and the next thing we knew, a sign was reading "16 miles to Alexandria".

Obviously we were way off our northerly road, but now that we were so close to Alexandria,--far south of the Natchez Melrose line,--we continued to the "Heart of Louisiana," and then headed north for the 47 mile drive toward Melrose. By now the clouds had blown away. There was no evidence of snow in this section, and a nice freezing olden moon turned the mid-night into a scintillating Louisiana landscape where only oblivion of blackness had been before.

We arrived at Melrose a little after midnight. It was freezing,--possibly 6 degrees about zero,--with a whid that raced through the trees, making strange and weird moving shapes in the shadows of the waving branches. Noble to the end, and withal, within an inch of numbness, Fugabou helped me unload the car, each of us scurrying like strang apperitions of a wild Aloween, back and forth with treasure from the car in the side garden date to my little house.

Still operating on all cylinders, the Madam met me on one of my trips,--still hatless, asking me if I was alright, kissed me twice, and said good night. Fugabou stopped only a minute before the blazing fire in my hearth, and then flew on to his little cabin where his wife and little boy were awaiting him.

I was frankly glad that that ten hour trip on the coldest day Louisiana has known in many a year was over, but every second of it I had enjoyed thoroughly. We had started out for something. We had brought home a treasure. Nobody could have imagined in the morning that we would have seen Natchez under snow before we returned. Adam had apparently stood the trip well. My fire was warm. Grandpa,--Uncle Whitefoot, was waiting for me, and I could sleep in contentment and peace.



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January 19th - Friday.

I could have slept a little more soundly if it hadn't been quite so cold. When 7 struck and Frank appeared with coffee, I was enchanted at the prospect of being thawed out a bit by the blazing fire he would build for me.

In my bathroom I found a pitcher of water which was the more precious because of its scarcity, since all water pipes on the plantation had been drained yesterday while the Madam and I were sailing through the country side, and this care to remove the water was well advised, since everything was frozen tighter than a drum. Fortunately there is plenty of water in the cisterns, so I believe we will not suffer any shortage even though we may not be able to draw on Kane River for water for some days.

I took a little turn around the garden after breakfast, but the wind was high and penetrating in spite of the brilliant sunshine which, for the first time, lost its warmth in this sub-tropical climate.

The Madam came over a little after nine, and I was enchanted to discover that she was as fit as a fiddle with no ill effects from our extraordinary undertakings and far reaching travels of yesterday.

Miss "ellie came over a little later, and together we worked until noon. As the "r. and sister had gone to Alexandria for the day, there had been a possibility that the baby would come up here from Cloutierville, but the Madam thought it would be unwise to bring him out in view of the extreme cold. We accordingly drove down there after dinner, taking Frank part way with us in order that he might drop off near Magnolia Plantation at the cabin where his former wife lives with her coal black husband to determine, if possible, what became of Tony since Wednesday.

The Madam and I continued to Cloutierville, and finding everything fine there, we picked up Frank on our return. It seems that on Wednesday when Frank bought a five dollar ticket for Tony to take him back to New Orleans, putting him on the train at Montrose, Tony gave the conductor ten cents instead of the ticket, and got off at a the next station, Derry. I suppose he may have turned in his ticket. Poor Frank.

Miss "ellie and I worked the remainder of the afternoon until supper time, when we joined the family at the big house, and afterwards sat with the Madam before the Franklin stove, reading from the life of "ssac Franklin. I said goodnight at eight, returning home with a big armful of extra quilts which the Madam had thoughtfully laid out for me.

J'ai trouve le fils de mon domestique chez moi. Extraordinaire. Il y a un nouveau pardessus,--le billet, sans doute. Il restera chez son pere.

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January 20th - Saturday.

Another brilliant sunshiny day, but still as cold as yesterday with everything, including the water pipes frozen stiff.

I had planned to go to town, and as "ugabou was going in that direction too, I suggested that he call for me at eight so that we might make the trip together, for I wanted to get there by nine o'clock.

We started at eight, with "enry accompanying us, too, as it seems he just has to travel around the country a bit after yesterday's or Thursday's taste for the big road. After going about six miles, the car began steaming badly, and so we stopped to discover that the radiator had cracked. Fortunately there were little canals on both side of the road at this point, so we could easily put some water in the radiator, but we had figured without the frost, for the little canals were frozen so hard that we had to attack it with hammers and fence posts to break through. Fugabou thought it would be but a ten minute welding job to put the car back in order, and so we returned to Melrose. The garage took exactly two hours to do the trick, and so I reached town after eleven.

Fugabou was going on beyond town for twenty miles or so to see his sister about coming to cook for "unt Sammie, for Elmer declares that she will never make a go of it, and so I suggested that Fugabou might watch out for me on the road back, for he would probably reach Melrose by one o'clock.

With things attended to in town,--the Dentist being out and the barbers being lined up with customers, I decided to return home without waiting for the car, but I waited an hour on the road before any cars stopped for me. Finally a school but had a heart, and in consequence I rode down with eight or ten men whom the driver had picked up here and there. We talked much of Tuesday's election, and a couple of the travelers all of local origin, seemed to be strong anti-Long persuasion. We stopped at Cypress where the politicians bought us all a drink which certainly meant something at the moment as we were all half frozen, what with awaiting the ride in the first place and with the breeze that sailed through the contraption after we were once inside.

I left the bus at Montrose, and headed up the lane, passing a car which halted, turned around and headed back in the Melrose direction. It was "ayne, and I was glad of the ride up the lane toward home.

Dinner was done, of course, but Lemence had saved mine for me, and so I ate it hastily in solitary grandeur in the dining room. I was only alone to putter around my place and confide what was wrong with her job. In one way she was right but one



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"a. 20th - concluded.

point she neglected to consider and that is that her poor brain isn't capable of administering the kitchen and dining room.

I took my coffee with the "adam in her room, with "ugabou popping in immediately after his arrival from town. He registered surprise at seeing me home, for he had feared he had missed me on the way. His mission had been to see his sister who is a fine cook, and to persuade her to come to "Melrose, but he had been unable to persuade her.

"I might juss as well tell you the truth, Madam, she's done took up with a nigger and she ain't gwine to leave him".

"And that's alright," responded the Madam promptly. "You're a good child, "ugabou, and of course I always expect you to tell me just how it is. And that cook is out, and now it looks to me as though it's your job to look around and find another."

"It sure is, Miss "enry, and I know where there's one, but don't you tell nobody nuthin'. It's Frank's wife, and she's a good cook but Frank is jealous of her, and there's too many men folks around the kitchen".

"And that's alright, too, "ugabou. And I wont say nuthin' about it. If Frank wont be happy to have his wife here then I don't want her becaue I can't run this house without Frank and if he isn't happy he'll probably drink, and if he drinks he aint no good to me, and so let him keep his wife at home and you all find me another cook.

There followed the coffee period and a discussion of the impending week, after which Miss Nellie and I worked until supper time, after which we read for a while with the Madam before the great stove. About eight a telegram came saying that Betty Smedley would arrive from "utin, Texas the following morning at eight thrity. I don't recall having met her although I am sure we shall not be long in getting acquainted since she is one of Aunt "ammie's "children", and I am sure all of us must have a few things in common sympathy. In this instance, however, I feel that there will be much of mutual understanding, but for what reason I can't say.

It was still freezing cold, and so I galloped home to stoke my fire. Quelqu'un l'avait fait. A dix heure et demi j'ai marche jusqu'au pont sous la lune. Louisianne, la vie deslieuse,

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"January 21st - Sunday.

Seven o'clock and Frank with the rich "ouisiana coffee, and a report on the weather outside that it is still freezing cold, blue sky but not quite so strong winds. The water of course is still available from the cistern only.

I dressed leisurely and relished my breakfast, and lingered long over the radio programmes which were redolent with light classics.

Frank and I spent some time, too, arranging certain of our treasures

The Madam came over for coffee with Miss Nellie, and we revelled in the glories that had escaped destruction.

About eleven Betty Smedley arrived from Autsin, Texas, having come on the train as far as Perry. "ugabou had met her at the station, and her first enchantment was to hear him say something about the "planation", for that beloved word that stands for so much, and most particularly to the colored folk, becomes especially endeared to one when it slides from plantation to planation.

Frank brought coffee again after we were all together at my house, and the morning sped along swiftly until dinner time which was later by an hour today because of the change in menu necessitated by the damage done to some of the foodstuffs by the intense cold. Usually dinner is late anyway since poor Elmer can't seem to manage more than one pot at a time, but today Clemence is reigning over the culinary department since the "adam gave Elmer the day off to "get herself straight" with the church.

Chickesn roasted and roast port were the big staples of dinner, but unfortunately both of these had to be returned to the over as neither was quite done,--this being one of Clemence's old short-comings, since she is always anxious to be on her way on Sunday and doesn't mind risking a raw chicken if there is the slightest chance she can get away two seconds earlier.

All afternoon, Miss Nellie and I worked on historical note of Natchez. I liked the indenture papers of Dr. Carmichael's assistant, a boy of 13, who was bound over to the Dr. for 8 years service on the understanding that at the expiration of that time the Dr. would give him \$20., two suits, one of which would be new, and with the understanding that during the indenture, the Dr. would have taught the boy "the trade of surgeon, barber, bleeder and tooth-puller." This was a 1798 legal document.

The air was so clear I took a brisk walk before supper, although the cold cut some of the pleasure. We ate at five o'clock, and in the evening we read until eight before the Franklin stove and so goodnight.



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January 22nd - Monday.

Still cold this morning, but a gray sky instead of the unfailing blue we have had since Thursday.

Frank was a little earlier this morning, and so I was done with breakfast by seven thirty and already at my machine when Sam Brown blew in. He said the Madam had sent word that I should look out doors, for it was snowing, and one doesn't see it very often at Melrose.

And so I stepped out to see some little flakes falling steadily, but melting as they touched the ground. Sam Brown hazarded further particulars:

"De say dat ole Aunt Hannah am pluckin' her geeses."

The Madam came over at ten o'clock and by then the snow was beginning to take hold in earnest and the ground was covered. Miss "ellie came shortly afterward and Miss Betty, sitting by my glowing grate until dinner time. By then five inches or so of snow covered the ground and it was time to think of cameras to record the phenomenon. Dinner was longer than usual and the mail accordingly arrived before we had finished out ~~in~~ demi-tasse by the fireplace. There was good mail with many a letter and clipping to gladden our snowbound world.

Miss "ellie and I worked during the afternoon, save for the coffee interim when sister blew in with many a tale of hardships on travel brought about by the snow. Among other things, it seems two cows slipped on a little bridge over a culvert, so their legs went through the boards and there they were trapped, resting on their stomachs, unable to get back on their feet. Their legs had frozen. Other items drifted in through the radio, with the announcement of schools being closed in Alexandria because of inadequate heating facilities for the extreme cold, and cities all the way from northern Louisiana such as Shreveport way down below the central part of the state reported water pipes completely out of operation and a dwindling supply of gas which so many homes use for cooking and heating. With the water still frozen at Melrose, the situation isn't very serious, although somewhat inconvenient, but in the larger cities the failure of water supplied must whisk the community back to primitive times without the accompanying opportunities that attended communities that were less congested and built upon plans that never contemplated the intricacies of modern plumbing.

Shortly before supper, Elmer spoke to the Madam about the necessity of her having boots if she was to come to the big house on the morrow. The Madam explained that good heavy wollen stockings would be adequate for her to wear as a foot covering between her cabin and the big house, and provided them, but Elmer didn't seem satisfied. With "e dined in comparative loneliness, with only five or six at table, and after reading until eight, we said good night, and I returned home,--the snow still falling.

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January 23rd - Tuesday.

Frank was five minutes late this morning. It's curious how accustomed one becomes to listening for an accustomed tread that the slightest variation of its arrival brings immediate and full wakefulness.

By now the snow was about eight inches, I suppose, and surely the trip from Frank's cabin away over at the end of the cotton field on Lane River must have been quite a different kind of progress. Besides, Frank's wife is down with pleurisy, and I suppose things at home are accordingly more demanding on his pre-dawn labors at such a time.

The coffee was delicious this morning, doubly so because of the chill and the knowledge that Louisiana had had its largest snow fall in years.

The Madam came over for coffee, bringing the news that a telegram had at long last arrived from Mrs. Moore, saying that she could not travel under the prevailing inclemency, and that her speech in Natchitoches would be postponed until next Monday, and that she would accordingly be at Melrose then, providing she could burrow out from "atchez.

Aunt "ammie was enchanted that we were all here since this kind of weather would probably not repeat itself again within our lifetime, and it was good that we could see the "sunny South" under such extraordinary circumstances. With the thermometer maintaining it level well below freezing and the water pipes frozen stiff, there is a vague recollection in my mind about the Purple Cow and somebody's expressed preference "to rather see than be one".

All day yesterday, Elmer had held out for her rubber boots, not showing up in the morning, and not bothering to get a message to the Madam regarding her intentions providing the snow should hold out for a few days. What she might think is to become of kitchen operations and those who gather around the board whether it snows or doesn't, I haven't the vaguest notion. But this morning, in spite of the continued snow, Elmer appeared, explaining that she had had a pain in her side and had accordingly staid home. The Madam told her she had done the correct thing because she didn't want anyone to come to work who might be ill. Elmer said she still had a little pain to which the Madam countered that she had done quite wrong in coming out today, and recommended that she return home to her bed at once. As the Madam has employed a girl to take care of Elmer's children during the day, this girl could no doubt help out Elmer too. And so Elmer was enchanted to grasp at this chance to spend another day at home. She has already confided to Frank and me that she doesn't want the job anyway, feeling that with her few pigs and chickens she can get along alright without working. She realizes, of course, that her cabin is reserved for who ever cooks at the big house, but she doesn't mind relinquishing it, in spite of the fact that she has no idea where she is going to hang her bandana next. How marvelous



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Jan. 23, concluded.

these people are to thus be able to forego thoughts of tomorrow while doing what whim dictates today. Somewhere Archibald Outledge has said that one vast difference between the colored people and the white on plantations, at least, is that the colored man has a preponderate capacity for happiness and if he makes any one along the way, all well and good, but the money is not primary for the happiness while we white people are geared up in such a way as to think we must accumulate money before we can begin enjoying life.

And so Aunt Ammie's little maid, Rita, has taken over the kitchen for the moment with Frank giving her a hand in some of the major operations, while Tony is helping his father in his regular household duties, which of course delights Frank. As for the other men who work on the woodpile and about the garden, I am not certain as to what has happened to them, although I suppose they may be about the place and I haven't seen them. I do understand that dumb Bluff went into hiding with the fall of the first snow flake and hasn't been seen hide nor hare of since. It certainly is curious how these people fly off at a tangent most unexpectedly and then return to their accustomed orbits without a ripple from either their side or the employer's. It would be interesting to see how long organized society would continue to operate under such a system, but who can say for certain that so-called society wouldn't be almost as civilized if the workers on armaments in every country should occasionally go hay-wire.

Miss Ellie and I worked all afternoon, with a couple of long interruptions from the coffee hour on and again about supper time. And in the evening we read before the Franklin stove of the doings of Issac Franklin.

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January 24th - Wednesday.

"Another beautiful blue sunshiny day with the thermometer still so low that the snow isn't melting.

When the snow had started falling, Frank had brought me a package, saying that it was something from Santa Claus, he thought. It was a new pair of shoes, and most appropriate in the timing of its arrival. This morning when he arrived with my coffee and to build my fire, he told me that I must stay in bed until he had "passed" some oil over the shoes so that they would be protected from the snow. It's grand to know one soul whose devotion appears to be based on affection only. I suppose there is a vast amount of affection in this world that has as a foundation some common enthusiasm for the same thing or things, and I suppose genuine love is often fed on such a common or series of common interests. But I feel particularly fortunate to have found someone like Frank for the two things we have in common are quite different,--one being my devotion to him and the other being his devotion to me,--and yet, on second thought, I suppose such devotion is in reality the same thing, and so our affection for each other is as natural a growth as the love of people who bind themselves together in a same enthusiasm that may or may not be outside the purely personal or spiritual or intellectual relationship.

The Adam and Miss Ellie came over at ten for coffee. Miss Nellie and I had decided to read a little from the Bible each day, and this of course started off the Madam on a matter of enthusiasm which unlike everyone else, wells up in inexhaustible freshness. She pointed out that in the last chapter of Proverbs, one finds 31 verses, and that these individual verses are supposed to be taken by the individual as his very own, the verse being determined by the date of his birth. "Actually we went through all our friends and were amazed at the patness of all of them. I suppose, parenthetically, that it is pretty easy to attach almost any verse to anyone, but I thought Aunt Ammie's was particularly apt: Her birthday is the 14th, and the fourteenth verse runs something to the effect that she is like the ships of the sea that brings her food from afar. In view of the dearth of inspiration from her immediate relatives and associates, it is astonishingly true that she seems always to have found her real companions from afar.

And so on with our work, with a visit at eleven from Betty, and so to dinner and afterward the mail with news from afar, saying that impending visits were in the offing,--possibly within a week, so it looks like a houseful within the next week. I certainly hope the pipes may be thawed out by then.

In the afternoon Miss Nellie and I worked straight through, for the most part going over Indian affairs in the Atchez region, and getting the most pleasure out of the inventory of the 1823 inventory of Issac Guion of Natchez, Miss. What interested us



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Jan. 24th - concluded.

particularly was the library inventory of the estate. This included the "encyclopaedia Britannica in 18 volumes, which I hadn't realized existed at that time. And then there were other such items as Weems's Life of Washington, appraised at fifty cents, which ought to make a collector turn over in his grave, and a scattered collection of "olitaires works, Benjamin Franklins works, "And eccentric novel", "A domestick cooking book", as well as "French dictionaries, Ordannances of Louis XIV, And an American Atlas, appraised at .25 and a volume on American Travels at the same price, with works of Locke, several volumes of Poems, & things by poets, and a variety of novels, etc. Added to this and many other volumes was the "amily Bible, in "nglish, I suppose, and a French Testament. This is as interesting a spread of types in a plantation library as I have run across.

In view of the brightness of the sun, Betty was busy taking pictures all day, and in the late afternoon she came to take a final one. I wanted it to be of Frank and me together, and the Madam wanted us to get Heintzie, the dachhund, in it, as she felt he would show up well in the snow, and she could send it to a friend in a New York Hospital who is very fond of the dog.

Just as the picture was about to be snapped, we called "eintzie to us, as he had been hovering around the "adam, but in calling him, Penn the police dog and Snow the white bull, both responded, and "now, being jealous of Penn, started a real dog fight. I guess each would have killed the other if they hadn't been separated, but Frank grabbed Penn by one hind leg, and I grabbed Snow by the same extremity, and together we pulled and pulled. 'ts a pity Betty didn't cease the opportunity to snap the picture, but she was too excited to think of it. Finally the dogs released their throat holds for a firmer grasp, and at that moment we dragged them apart, while Frank shut up Penn behind the picket fence in the wood lot, while I swung "now around and around until I reach the screened lowered back gallery where I shut him up, bleeding badly about the ears and neck, to cool off a little. Five minutes later, when going to the big house, I found them both huddled on the steps, each trying to get warm by combining their body heat, and obviously as kindly disposed toward the other as any pair of love birds ever were.

After supper "iss "ellie wound up thread while the "adam read until eight, when we said goodnight. It was marvelous to step out into the glory of the shimmering whiteness of the night, a great golden moon making the big house whiter than ever and the blanket of snow like a mantle of shimmering icing on an fabulous and unending birthday cake, with deep shadows cast by the trees making great cracks seemingly to appear in the icing, while the live oaks and magnolia trees gleamed on in their deep green glory, unmindful of a changing season.

Qu'elqu'un. cest tout.

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January 25th - Thursday.

Up early with the hopes of taking a long walk before dinner, but seven o'clock proved a low point in the thermometer which is still way below freezing, and so I put off until tomorrow what I might have done today, but would probably have frozen to death.

It is curious how gay everyone seems in this kind of weather if gaily is the custom of the individual, and how morose those seem to intensify themselves who incline in the other direction.

Miss Nellie and I worked all morning, after the Madam had come over for ~~xxxx~~ mid-morning coffee.

Dinner came later than usual, so that we could end our demi-tasses and cigarettes with the mail which was rather fat and altogether nice.

The afternoon breezed along fast, with continual interruptions by this one and that bringing in food to bridge us over until supper time and wood to keep the fireplaces going.

J. H. and Celeste returned about supper time from Mexico City, and seemed not especially surprised at the snow in Melrose, since they had encountered it on their return far down in Mexico. I thought it was particularly kind of them to remember everyone with gifts, whiskey cigarettes, baskets, bags and whatnot. I liked to hear J. H. tell of his impressions of the country below the Rio Grande, too. I was particularly impressed by his account of "the Castle of Chilpultec and all those places where Macmillian and all those people lived." Surely poor old Maximilian was unlucky even after all these years.

In the evening we read from Isaac Franklin, and talk somehow got around to steamboats, and the Madam spoke of how her mother used to tell her about a steamboat on Bayou Lafourche that scared the daylights out of the inhabitants by steaming up the river and blowing a new-fangled type of whistle that was supposed to resemble a nightingale but in reality sounded like an alarm against a slave uprising which had put that section about that time on the ragged edge. It seems that this occurred shortly after the Civil War in Tibaudou. The merchants in that area began to notice that the negroes were buying large amounts of coal-oil "kerosine", to such an extent that it excited wonder and then alarm. Shortly upon

the discovery of this fact, a faithful servant imparted the information that all the colored women had been banded to dispose of the white women, and burn their houses, while the negro men would undertake to kill all the white men with sugar cane knives and what not. The leaders were hunted down immediately and the whole group shot, thus ending the fear of an out-break until the S.S.K



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January 28th - Friday.

Another beautiful bright blue dawn. As soon as Frank and I had reviewed the night as I drank my steaming coffee and he built the fire, I dashed through an improvised shower and started for a long walk. The sun was still below the horizon as I crossed Cane River bridge, and the marvelous Japanese Print of black shadows of the pines mirrored on the placid water made the glistening white banks of the stream tice as brilliant in this second before sunrise. The walk along the lane was easy, --all the slosh and mud having been frozen into a slippery pavement, and it was ~~xx~~ fun to see my shadow glide along the snow fields by the first rays of the great yellow disk that promised another perfect day.

My little journey carried me far. Il y avait un paradisus. Near Bermuda I stoped for a moment or two to speak with a nice old darkie. At first thought I was impressed by his addressing me as Father, since this was the second time I had been so saluted this morning, but on second thought, I took this to be as a matter of course, since I imagine only the clerics in this neighborhood wander about the countryside, hatless in temperatures such as these.

I was delighted to find that in spite of the sub-freezing weather, the sun and exercise made winter clothing seem entirely out of order, so that I was delighted equally in finding Frank in the dining room of the big house when I returned about 11:15, for he brought me a couple of glasses of milk which helped out a lot in bridging over my coffee before seven until dinner at noon.

I got off a little mail, and then came dinner, followed by some good mail, and a long afternoon of work over Natchez records. The wind was mounting in the afternoon, and Miss Nellie and I both remarked about the draft that breezed through the maisonnette. When Miss Nellie went back to the big house about five, she must have remarked about it to the Madam, for shortly before dix supper she visited me, and then left again, returning with some cloth which she left in the rocking chair. I asked nothing about it, but sensed that something was up,-- particularly as Frank came back to look at my fire just as I was leaving for supper, although he had fixed it only a few moments before.

When supper was finished, I prayed the Madam to go over to my house with me, and after a few protestations she agreed, and so she and Miss Nellie and I braved the snow and cold wind. Stepping inside, I was enchanted to find that while I had been at the table, Frank and Tony had put bars along the ~~gx~~ balcony, and hung curtains of lovely old crimson, so that my room was

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divided into two parts. And so the fireplace, sofa, bookshelf bed and table become one unit, and the other section is accordingly made up of the great bookcase, tables desk, chairs, the two stories of the studio and balcony.

This transformation is so typical of the Madam when she clears the decks and undertakes something to guarantee happiness for someone. And somehow it is so infectious that the darkies seem to love to participate in the seeming charade, giggling and laughing in high glee, while the speed with which it is accomplished and the happiness that the Madam exudes cannot help to fill one's hear with a gratitude ~~xxx~~ that is almost drown in love.

And after a thorough inspection, we all ran back to the big house to read for a while, and then I said goodnight and returned to my cosy newly fashioned sanctum sanctorum,--and the night was long and delicious. Et j'ai pense au roi d'Angleterre.



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January 27th - Saturday.

Saturday and still freezing in spite of the continued blue sky and brilliant sunshine.

Shortly after breakfast, the Madam came over for a little chat with Miss Nellie following shortly afterward. While we were having coffee there were the usual interruptions, with this one and the other of the servants coming for instructions on one point or another. It is pretty deadly for continuity in conversation but it is grand in the realm of humor,--what with the marvelous manner in which the Madam handles everything, and so as to make the darkies giggle all over.

One caller was Jesse, an old mulatto with close-cropped curly white hair. He said "Madam, I'd like to talk in private" whereupon the Madam said "Well, go ahead, the servants are getting out of here right now and Miss Nellie and Mr. Francois are my children, so you can say anything you want to."

And so with the departure of the carriers of trays, etc., Jesse started off with this:

"Miss Henry, I been hearin' you needs a cook, and I wanted to tell you that I's got a cooking wife for shur."

The Madam thereupon made inquiry regarding the domestic status of this "cooking wife", as to the number of children, of which it seems there are six, where they live, which seems to be across the river from Melrose, the family having lived on Melrose plantation for 15 years. It's odd, in a way, that no one should remember Jessie's wife. I was impressed by Madam's unique ability to make the darkies feel happy, as she again displayed it at this point by turning to me with the remark: "You know, I never would have had a garden if it had not been for Jessie for it was he who got me started with my flowers and it looks as though I shall never have a kitchen either unless Jessie comes to my rescue again and provides me with a cook."

Jessie thereupon beamed with pride and a little embarrassment. But he forgot this when the Madam said: "Jessie, I thought you were down on Little River helping Mr. Charles these days"

"Yassum, dat's where I'se supposed to be right now, but all this snow and all, you see the weather got between me and Mr. Charles, so I'se still here."

"Well, that's alright," the Madam responded, advising Jessie to say "nuthin" to anybody about the "cooking wife" until Monday when she would give the matter further consideration.

And so the coffee hour came to a close with the departure of Jessie, the Madam departing to attend to a myriad of other duties, and Miss Nellie and I back to our research of Natchez historical documents.

Saturday, concluded.

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Dinner done and a barn mail, and so Miss Nellie continued our work at my fireside. The cold weather continuing, our visitors during the afternoon were fully as frequent as usual, what with the coffee that was to be drunk and the fires that were to be doctored. Somehow Frank can tell by the looks of a log how long it will burn, and so he appeared at the appropriate moment several times during the afternoon. Tony didn't do much stoking, however, as Betty has him scrubbing pots and pans in the kitchen, and is teaching him how to stir up biscuits and whatnot.

I must say that supper was particularly appetizing, what with this vast array of scullions that were falling all over each other about the stove,--the wife of a Justice of the Supreme Court of Texas, Elmer, Joney, Rita, Sister and Frank. Even though such an imposing number might "spoil the soup", I suppose it was inevitable that something good must have come out of it somehow.

In the "overtime hour" by the fireplace where Betty and I drank the brew that Frank makes especially for us each night, we spoke of Frank's exceptional qualities. Betty asked me if I thought Tony inherited them, saying that she thought she would build a little house for him on her place at Austin, and train him to be an excellent servant. It wasn't difficult for me to avoid referring to what my guess was as to Tony's inherited characteristics, but I didn't hesitate to advise her against too vast plans when for the moment they concerned another individual's place of livelihood, pointing out that I felt the air of Austin would be much too dry for a boy born and raised on Cane River, and that I felt the humidity of the Delta country would always be a primary element in whatever goes in to make up Tony's happiness, and that it was difficult to imagine the son of a pelican dwelling in contentment on the range of the long horns.

After supper we all gathered before the Franklin stove, reading The Nightingale and The Rose, The Remarkable Rocket and the Happy Prince, and speaking at length of the gorgeous color and melody of the prose poetry of Oscar Wilde, and so to bed.



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January 28th - Sunday.

Another beautiful day, with just a suggestion in the air that the last 10 days of freezing temperatures may at last be breaking.

Frank arrived a little earlier than usual this morning, and this fact plus the added might intensified by the new crimson curtains, made everything seem doubly shadowy. But the marvelous good will that wells up from Frank's heart and floods the room with his cheery good morning makes the dawn of any day. In the uncertain light, I sensed something different in his wearing a parel. I asked him what it could be and he said that since his wife had been sick, his clothes hadn't been washed with the usual regularity, and that he had had to wear an old pair of blue pants which must have been the color element that made the difference in his appearance. After pouring my coffee he turned on the light, and it was then I noticed more distinctly the charming blue color of the faded denim, the sight of which carried my memory back to blue dotted streets on the French coast, and yew-hedged gardens of Versailles where many a time I had secretly enjoyed the soft light blue of the soldier's uniforms, and contemplated the characteristics of the nation that had the imagination to dress their youthful recruits in a color that was about as far from suggesting powerful aggression as could be contrived.

And then I thought, too, that somewhere back in Louisiana history, Frank's ancestors had been Frenchmen who had come to this locality, and somehow had begotten offspring of color, and here in this early morning light stood a composite picture of two races I have so long loved and who in this symbol have found so much that sums up the goodness of heart that too frequently the speed of civilization has distracted men from cultivating. To me it is marvelous how lusciously it ripens in the hearts of people like Frank on this opulent soil of Louisiana.

Before breakfast, I brought out the treasure which the Madam and I had accumulated a week-ago last Thursday., and arranging

arranging the gorgeous display in the brilliance of the added light which the Louisiana snow has added to the Louisiana sunshine.

The Madam and Miss Nellie came over for coffee, and for the last respite of calm before the big house gets underway and the usual array of Sunday visitors have intensified the excitement which always seems to operate and to destroy the calm that should operate on this day we are pleased to call the Sabbath.

Added to the imposing staff of kitchen incompetents of yesterday is Clemence whose presence ought to make a perfect Bedlem out of the domain which is already seething with the strange accumulation of sub-conscious cooks that for the past few days have certainly been successful in extracting a goodly slice of disorder out of chaos.

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Sunday, the 28th of January, concluded.

But dinner, in spite of all, was good, and fortunately was over in a comparatively short time, with the Madam, Betty, Sister and the Dr. going down Monett's Ferry way to call on patients, and Miss Nellie and me returning to our research work.

Frank stood by as usual, guarding the operation of Melrose's household and bringing us our afternoon coffee, keeping our fires bright and reporting on the weather which seems to be moderating to such an extent that about half of the snow has melted.

Supper time came, with Betty doing the septon welding in the kitchen, Sister complaining of chills, the Madam keeping a relaxed hold on the vast variety of doings, and Miss Nellie and me trying to keep out from under foot.

Once out of the way, we all let down a little at the cigarette time, when the Dr. blew in for his supper after visiting patients. There was much fluttering about him by the Madam and Betty, and he and I discussed our individual reactions to so much attention. I recalled my own emotions when I had been late a week back for Saturday dinner, and remarked that I supposed Dr. Freud might do something for me in the way of psycho-analysis with my confession that so much flutter about me at food time put me in mind of a hot summer's day in a small mid-Western town when I had dashed in to a barber shop, and submitted to a going over in the hair-cut and shave departments by a huge Aunt Jemima, the only woman who had ever so stirringly wielded a razor over me as her amazingly flabby breastworks joggled about my incumbent figure. The Dr. said he liked the attention the women were paying him. I don't know why I talk so much.

J'ai trouve quelqu dans la cuisine qui avait fait quelque chose avec un pourboire. Misere. J'ai fait ce coquin sous band et fait mes prieres pour mes pauvres amis.

With dinner done, and the Dr. and wife departed, we went up to the Madam's room, intent upon relaxing after a tiring day. Just as we were to sprawl into easy chairs, Betty rushed in to stagger us with a 7:30 o'clock announcement that "Charlie McCarthy is on". And so the Madam suggested that she go listen on the radio where the programme had started, and closing the door we collapsed into our chairs, amazed at her inability to let down. We read for a while from The Times-Picayune in an article by Lyle written for Mardi-Gras, and at eight I said good night. I didn't listen to the radio, but shaved and took care of a lot of little things. The dogs bayed madly after midnight.



January <sup>29<sup>th</sup></sup> 30<sup>th</sup> - Monday - uncertain if date is correct.

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Up and abroad at a seasonable hour. I was delighted to see Frank and to determine from the quality of his voice that his cold was better and that all was well.

While I was having breakfast, Tony brought in ~~in~~ some wood to re-furbish my fire. He seemed to be in fine form, although I believe the current scourge of influenza is catching up with him as ~~he~~ he seemed to be suffering from a newly developed cold.

Miss Nellie and I spent the morning, busied about the Natchez notes, which we want to finish up before Mrs. Moore arrives tomorrow.

We also busied ourselves in making a key to the old plantation map of Adams country, so that we may the more readily locate the vast number of plantations at a glance, and at the same time have an accompanying list of the various owners of these old places.

Dinner came, and it was good, thanks to the good work Betty is doing with her several helpers in the kitchen. And then followed the mail which was light for me but heavy for the Adam and for Betty, with many a catalogue of books on Southern subjects, including one item covering the Colonization Society papers. The Adam is ordering this one immediately, feeling that it might have much of interest in it for me, since ~~it~~ it will probably have much to do about the activities of that semi-political group that used the Prince to further their own theories when Foster had finally released him.

In the afternoon Miss Nellie and I continued our work, and at four o'clock I took a little walk toward Aeline's but found the road too muddy to make much headway.

Back in time for supper, we hurried through it to get up to Franklin stove, for the weather continues to freeze, although I believe all the snow will be done for within another day if the sun keeps shining.

We chatted for a little while before eight o'clock, when I said goodnight and so to bed.

January 30th - Tuesday.--uncertain of exact date.

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I was delighted to learn from Frank when he arrived this morning that it was going "to be a pretty day", and so I flew out of bed and determined to take a walk before sun-up.

I went rather farther than I had expected but was fortunate in getting a ride part way back, and so was home before coffee-time.

Tony didn't come to work today, as the flu has stricken him and I am glad Frank insists that he stay at home.

Betty is still wielding the scepter in the kitchen, and that makes everybody happy including her, because for us, it means better food that poor Elmer could stir up and secondly because Betty really enjoys it, I believe. I think she is running a risk by spending so much time in the kitchen, for the floor is concrete, and I am afraid that is an excellent way for her to encourage a cold, particularly as she came to "elrose, in part at least, to rest.

In the afternoon Miss Nellie and I continued our labors on Natchez documents, and after dinner we all read Natchez newspapers. It seems that in the late afternoon of this day when Mrs. Moore was expected, a telegram arrived, saying that she was sick in bed and wouldn't be able to come. Either Miss Nellie or I had really expected that she would get here, and so we were not especially surprised.

I staid a little later than usual at the big house, what with all the talk of our proposed trip to the bluff city, and so it was nine o'clock before I got to my little house.



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3/5+  
January 30th - Wednesday - uncertain of the exact date.

Up early and delighted at the continued fair weather.

Miss Nellie and I worked much during the morning, save for the little visit the Adam paid us at coffee time.

After dinner, I went over to call on Felix, Frank's brother in law who lives on the other side of Cane River, hard by the convent. I found his wife in bed with the flu, but that made two for conversation since her husband cuts hair in the same room that she sleeps. I found him a kindly man, and I gathered somehow that he reads. This seems rather exceptional, but I do believe it is possible. I must ask Frank about this.

It was curious that the chair in which he seats his customers is much lower than an ordinary one. The result is that the poor man has to almost squat on his knees to perform on his victim.

But I liked his work, and for once in my life I didn't have to be bothered with a lot of pomades and strange mixtures, for he just cut my hair, and let it go at that without any of the usual frills which make the ordinary barber shop such a nightmare to people who don't care for all that excitement.

In the late afternoon I worked a bit on an article, and after supper I returned to do a bit more after spending an hour with the Madam before her Franklin stove.

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Feb. 1st  
January 31st - Thursday.

A little before seven I heard Frank's step on the gallery. A moment later I heard him talking with Grandpa who had been sitting at the door, waiting to get in to share my breakfast with me. It was still dark, and it seemed to take Frank a couple of minutes to reach my bedside with the morning coffee. I gathered that Grandpa might be slow in making up his mind to come in.

While making my fire, we talked as usual, reviewing what the night had done for the plantation and its people. Grandpa's phylandering and how Frank's cold was getting along. He still sounded hoarse, although I thought I detected a note of gaiety that did my heart good.

As soon as he had left, I started to get up to offer Grandpa some Kitty Ration so that he might not be too disappointed when we got around to the bacon upon Frank's return with the breakfast tray. As my toe touched my slipper, I automatically understood what it was that Frank had taken so long to get from the door to my bed side, for there was a grand spanking new pair of brown leather slippers in just the place I had left my old delapidated mules the night before. Instantly I realized that the Madam and I had connived with Frank, and that the latter had silently crawled under my bed, removed the old slippers and put the new ones in their place during the time that I thought he had been talking to Grandpa. This is so characteristic of the Adam and of Frank, and illustrates one more reason in a vast variety why Madam is such a precious place.

The breakfast tray arrived, with Frank wearing a big grin on his face and disclaiming any knowledge of what I was talking about. The Adam came over for 10 o'clock coffee, trying to sidestep all responsibility in a like manner. I must say the spirit of old Saint Nick flourishes madly in such a kingdom as this.

Miss Nellie came a few minutes after the Madam, and together we spoke of plans for the morrow, and whether we should stay one day or two in Natchez. Possibly one was the consensus of opinion, but I know for sure that it will be two. But of course there is always the possibility that we might not go at all, what with some "Miss Nellie's Uncle" and the added fact that the Adam has a severe cold.

Betty labored mightily in the kitchen, with Elmer fully as confused as usual, and with Tony entirely out of the picture as he had to go home because of the influenza which seems to have caught up with him. Dinner done, Miss Nellie and I read all afternoon, while running over points in the Natchez which we might visit on tomorrow's trip.

By supper time, the Madam's cold was worse, and the supper appealed little to her, although its quality was excellent. Sister arrived during the evening meal to stay until the Dr. arrived some-



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Thursday- concluded, <sup>Feb. 1</sup>~~Jan. 31~~.

after eight. Miss Nellie returned with me to my house to read further and at eight we went over to see how things were going in the big house. Sister and Betty had already put the Madam in bed and made her swallow a lot of medicine to break up her cold and tear down her resistance to sleep.

If things are no worse in the morning, we shall start about six thirty.

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<sup>2nd</sup>  
February 1st, - Friday. 1940

Up and about by six, with a cold shower and a cold shave, which is one way to begin a long cold trip.

At six thirty + went over to the big house to find the Madam's cold no better, but with that no deterrent to her prospective jaunt of a couple of hundred miles.

Betty was in the kitchen filling a huge thermos bottle of coffee and making yards of sandwiches so that we might dine in picnic style.

A little after seven we got under way, Betty, Miss Nellie and the Madam on the back seat and Eugabou and me on the front. It was cold, and Betty was doubly so, having spent so much time in the kitchen. Besides none of us had had much breakfast, save coffee which McKinley had brought us in the Madam's room.

Natchitoches, Clarence, Winfield, Trout, Jeana, Ferriday and at 10:30 Vidalia, with the Mississippi, heavy with great ice cakes below us and the bluffs of Natchez rising up out of the river on the opposite shore.

With the Madam's cold being what it was and Betty still chilly, we let the sandwiches take care of themselves while we dined at Burton's, sending a tray of food out to Eugabou who waited in the car.

After a little shopping for warm woolen socks, we drove out by Dunleith, around Longwood, stopped at Gleaster for Betty and Miss Nellie to investigate the interior while the Madam and I walked about the grounds. And so on to "Goat Castle," which I must say is one of the lovely old houses of the Natchez region in spite of all the wear and tear the house has been put through by time; and the pet goats of Mr. Jana and Miss Dockery, who are now living on the second floor, leaving the collection of visitor's fees to a couple of negroes whom someone had tricked out in costumes closely akin to the Alpin figure appearing on Peter's Chocolate Bars. Much of the lovely old dilapidated furniture still remains on the first floor, and in the lovely drawing room at the right, the lovely old rosewood pieces were a little more forlorn looking because of the presence of a dead goat in one corner of the room. Fortunately the thermometer was below freezing.

And so back through town, and out the Washington Road, by the old Slave hospital, the "forks of the road," where the old



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Feb. 1st, - continued, used to be located, at the corner of Liberty Road, and so passed Devereux, and on to Washington itself, stopping for a moment to glance at the Wales house and the Church in front of it, and so across the way to the campus of Jefferson College where we took photographs of the building and of the great live-oaks where Burr's trial had been held in 1807.

And thence on to Foster's Mound Plantation where we took several photographs, and where Fugabou and I explored the pastures to see if we could locate the old Foster grave yard. On the way across the fields, we inquired at a cabin concerning this burying ground, and an ample Aunt Femima with a majestic wave of the arm told us that we would find it out there by the tall pine tree.

We crossed a couple of mow fields in the direction of the pine trees that we growing along a bayou, but their extent was so vast and their height so similar that we couldn't find the tomb stones. Finally on our way back we stumbled over a stone in the high weeds. A little later we found the stump of a pine tree. I suppose this was the tall one the Aunt Femima had so graphically pointed out.

Returning to the Mound, we picked up the ladies, and drove them across the cotton fields to well nigh the tombstones, and in spite of her cold, the Madam insisted on covering the entire collection with an appraising eye, in spite of our mis-givings as to the wisdom of her exposure to the elements. Miss Nellie copies all the inscriptions, including those of James Senior and James Jr., James Seniors' widow and other inscriptions not bearing the Foster name, but dating to the 1790's. We also took photographs of some of the stones, and were withal delighted that we had had a chance to record these notices, for some of the stones have already been knocked down, and all will probably have disappeared before long. It's curious how the State of Mississippi, which now owns this plantation, so utterly neglects the graveyard, and so thoughtlessly disregards the alterations being made in the historic home of this citizen whose slave played the most romantic role of any Crown Prince that came down to slavery and ultimately ~~xxxx~~ rode back to Africa with the concern of the United States Government.

And after taking a few pictures of the Plantation House itself, we headed back toward Natchez, traveling along the traces that took us by the ruins of lovely Homewood which had burned less than a month ago. . . and then, after a quick look at a couple of great mansion in town, we drove along the River road leading north from the city, passed Clairemont, which had also been destroyed by fire less than a month ago, and so on to the Devils Punch Bowl, where we took more pictures of the sunset which was

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Feb. 2nd - cont.

at that moment giving unusual value to this most arresting view of the Mississippi.

Thence back to town, a stop at an antique shop, and then on the the Bela Hotel. I sent Fugabou away with the car, after the bellhop had told him where he could find a good place to sleep. - I believe in the Natchez hotel for colored people which it has maintained for ever so long,--probably long before the War when planters so frequently came to town from their properties to call on friends for a few days.

We dined together, - the Madam, Miss Nellie and Betty and I, after which I said good night to them, and telephoned Charles and Myrtie Wynnes at Cherokee, the charming 1810 home which they purchased during the passed year and restored. It is hard by Chataw, and is as pleasant a little mansion as I have run across in many a day. I believe the property was originally granted to Robert Dunbar by Vidal, the acting Spanish Governor prior, of course, to 1798, and from Dunbar it passed to on Miche, and so on to Frederick Stanton who lived there before moving into his tremendous mansion, Stanton Hall.

Charles and Myrtie are sweet, reminding me forever of babes in the woods and withal as charming. They have exercise marvelous taste in bringing back the beauty of this old place and are furnishing it slowly with the love and care it deserves. The poor dears put in a 3000 dollar retaining wall in the autumn and before Christmas a rain came along a washed it out. Such sweet children with such kindness toward people and old houses deserve better of fickle Capric

We sat until mid-night, talking over old times, and Natchez characters,--Mrs. Charlie, The Windy Hill Girls, Goat Castle,--and from one thing or another I came around to the point of view that Miss Kockery might have been the axe wielder in Jenny Merrill in the "Goat Castle Murder", and of Mrs. Moore who, contrary to her telegram to Aunt Cammie, hasn't been ill, and of the Kelly's of Melrose from whom they purchased Cherokee, and of Mr. Kelly's weakness for fire water and the intimate relation the family has with Henry Ford through the Kelly daughter who is married to Perry, the Seedman's son, whose sister is married to one of the Rockefelle boys, etc., etc., and so eventually goodnight and to bed.



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<sup>3rd</sup>  
February 2nd- Saturday.

Up around eight, and telephoned to the ladies who are staying on the same floor. Ordered breakfast for Miss Nellie and the Madam to be sent to their rooms while Betty and I went across the way for ours.

Together we discussed the condition of our patient, and I believe she is feeling a little better. It is so difficult to judge the Madam's state of health, her determination toward gaiety in spite of everything is so tremendous.

After breakfast, of which Betty ate lightly, since she is obviously succumbing to a cold, we went to the antique shop kept by the Stanton's of Gloucester. We looked over a lot of things most of which I found pretty expensive. While there, Miss Nellie telephoned saying that she and the Madam wanted to get out of the Hotel to see Natchez, and so we went away without making any purchases, and hurried back to the hotel, pausing only long enough to look over the old 1809 First Bank of Mississippi building with its classic stone pillars, and the charming mansion which adjoins it in the rear of the bank itself.

Off again, with Fugabou at the wheel, we ran out passed Belmont, and on to Windy Mill Manor, so that Miss Nellie and Betty could see the old place where Aaron Burr had lived during the days preceeding his treason trial in 1807. Thence back to town to inspect the interior of Choctaw which is badly in need of immediate repair to save it from ruin.

It was amusing when Madam, Miss Nellie and I started up the steps together, for as we reached the next to the last step, the whole staircase sank beneath our feet, but so gently that we landed rights side up without any harm to any of us. Fugabou contrived to brace the steps so that we could all get in, and there Miss Betty joined us, although with dampened ardour after taking pictures of "hreekee, since the influenza had by this time definitely fastened its grip on her.

And so we flew around to Burtons for some hot food, asperin and what not, and then on to Mrs. Moore's on whom the Madam called while I took Betty and Miss Nellie over to Stanton Hall, which I suppose is one of the most vast of local mansions in Natchez proper. It is still in good repair, and now that it is the headquarters of the Pilgrimage Club, it will probably have a good chance of surviving for a goodly number of years if fire doesn't come along.

A little later, after touring the house, we picked up the Madam, said hello to Mrs. Moore, and so drove around to Rosalie, to give Miss Nellie and Betty a chance to inspect the interior.

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<sup>3rd</sup>  
Feb. 2nd- Sat. con.

while Madam and I walked in the garden in front of this lovely old place.

We then drove around to Sally Johnson's from whom Robina had purchased her little clock during our last visit. My mission was two fold. I wanted to let Mrs. Johnson know that Robina was pleased with her purchase and I also wanted to see if there was any chance to purchasing the two volumes of Natchez and New Orleans newspapers of 1837. I failed in my latter attempt.

And so, with our visit completed, we headed the car toward Natchez under the Mill, taking the ferry across the ice-clogged Mississippi, and so straight away toward Helrose where we arrived a little before six o'clock, finding Robina had already arrived from Shreveport.

Betty had been freezing all the way home, and so she immediately jumped into bed, while the Madam, Miss Nellie and I had a belated supper while Robina sat and talked with us.

Elmer was in the seventh heaven of delight because McKinley is now in the kitchen, and she knows she is free to pick cotton now any time the fields are white with it instead of snow.

After such a trying outing, we all thought it wise for the Madam to get to bed at a seasonable hour, and so I said goodnight early, and went home.



February 4<sup>th</sup> - Sunday.

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Up early, and a little worried because I realized when Frank arrived that he had had a little drink, and I had misgivings as to what might transpire during the day, which, being Sunday, is always trying at "elrose, what with all the energetic family about.

I arranged the treasure so that it might appear to best advantage, and was delighted when I heard the Madam and Robina on the doorstep.

The Madam staid for coffee, and then flew, while "obina and I spent the entire morning together, arriving at the big house just after all the family had been seated.

Dinner done, Sister spent much time in the kitchen, showing McKinley how that Department should be run, while an aura of charged atmosphere coursed through the place at such a rate that I was enchanted to fly back to my house where "obina joined me.

The Madm retired to Lyle's cabin where she spent much of the afternoon while after coffee, Robina and I called on Betty who was being ministered unto by Sister while the latter's husband sat in the madam's room, reading the paper and guarding the baby.

Robina and I, after our visit, started out for Zeline's, but the roads being what they were after last night's rain, we had to forego the visit, and so returned to my house.

Supper came and went, and the big house settled down to its accustomed calm with good conversation before the Franklin stove for a while, with "obina telling us of the curious mix up in the Sterling-Silver department store set up in Shreveport,--a story which I must record elsewhere.

At night I retired, to listen to the Orson Wells-Hellen Hayes program for an hour and so to sleep.

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Feb 4th or [5th] Monday --I believe there is a mix up in the dates.

Up a little before seven, and full of expectations for a little ride with "obina on her way home. The day isn't going to be a very pretty one, I'm afraid, for it has rained much during the night, and is still misting some.

At seven thirty I ran over to the big house to find the Madam and "obina about to have breakfast, and so I joined them in the Madam's room.

We were a little late in getting started, and found the lane to "ontrose so bogged that we headed toward Bermuda. It began raining a good before we had gone far, and so I rode all the way to town, leaving "obina a little before nine in hopes of catching a train back. But I missed it, and so waited at the hotel until the downpour had ceased momentarily. Then I started to walk but hadn't gone far when J. H. stopped, asking me if I wouldn't care to ride. As I have a slight cold, I was enchanted to forego the 20 mile jaunt, and so we sailed home in a jiffy.

Betty is still in bed, and the Madam doesn't seem to have recuperated, although she was up and about, in spite of the fact that she had coughed all night. Miss "ellie came over to read to me for a while, but if I am not mistaken, influenza is creeping up on her, too, for her voice is husky and she is sniffing a bit.

In the faternoon we ran over some mail, and did a bit more reading, while I worked a little on my Journal. Supper came promptly a five, after which I called on Betty for a little while, and then sat with the Madam for an hour or so, although there was no thought of reading,--the general condition of all the guests and hostess being what it is.

In her conversation with me, Betty spoke of a very interesting set of volumes she has which is made up of the only copy made of interviews of the Attorney General of Texas,--complete conversations he held with oldsters up and down Red River, and their reminiscences of steamboat travel on that stream in the old days. Betty was given the volumes by the Attorney General himself, and she beleive it might form the basis of a very interesting study on navigation, from a quaint memoir point of view. As I understand it, this vast collection of interviews was made at the time a lawsuit was pending in Texas regarding the exact status of the Red River and its relationship to oild wells which were found in its course near the Texas-Louisiana border. I certainly hope I can see these papers eventually.

A little after eight I said good night to all the ailing, and was glad to be able to tumble into bed myself.



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Feb. 5th - Monday.

It rained all night, and this morning when Frank arrived it was still raining and, from his report, I gathered that it would keep pouring all day.

I had promised Robina, however, that I would ride part way with her, and I was glad of the opportunity to start the day off in traveling the big road for a ways with her.

We swallowed some toast and coffee before the Madam's fire, and then a little after seven, started out. The lane was so muddy that we decided on the Bermuda road, and that way we traveled, noting more than one care that had bogged down at different plantation entrances.

I said goodbye to Robina in town, and leaped under a canopy until the floods had let up a bit. Then I started walking toward home,--20 miles away,--hoping that I might see someone on the way who would give me a lift. As the pavements were under water and it was still sprinkling, I found the weather particularly dampish, especially as I had no coat. Fortunately a car stopped for me, and of all people it was J. A., who drove me "plumb" to Melrose, as the darkies would say. J. A. drives so madly that we were home in about 15 minutes, I guess. Of what I am certain, however, is the fact that he pays no attention to the condition of the road, the water, the mud-holes or anything, but sails slap dash through them so that the car seemed more like a submarine in troubled waters than an ordinary car. I wonder that the estate cars last as long as they do, for they certainly must take a terrific punishment.

I did some mail before lunch or dinner, and called on the Madam. She had gone back to bed, thanks to the grippe, and Betty was still in her's and Miss Nellie in hers. Although the big house is pretty much of a wash-out from the point of view of influenza at the moment.

In the afternoon I wrote an article on Windy Mill Manor, and a little before five had dinner with J. A., Dan, Eugene, for none of the ladies came down for food.

After supper I called on them for a little while, but said good night early, and was glad to fall in bed myself, as I didn't feel too hot.

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February 6th - Tuesday.

Another clammy dawn, and I suppose it is the same all over the state. This is too bad for New Orleans and the Mardi-Gras celebration which should be at its peak this final day, but I presume the parades and street dancing will be under unpleasant circumstances, thanks to this inclement weather.

I suppose Lyle's last article in the Times Picayune will appear in today's paper, and then the whole business will be off for another year.

I called on the patients shortly after breakfast time, and was glad to see that they were all staying in bed, which after all is the only sensible thing to do under such curious weather conditions when the influenza situation seems so entirely out of hand. But the Madam's spirit was completely in control of her physical tiredness, and so we were able to giggle and laugh quite a bit in spite of our sagging bodies. I undertook to dash off a couple of pieces of mail for her, including bids on Ingraham and Claiborne which I think we are going to get a lot of good from in research work.

At dinner the men dined alone as the ladies are still in bed, and that done, we went through the mail which was not especially heavy today.

In the afternoon we talked of Watchez things quite a spell, and I believe the high point of the trip was when Mr. Stanton of Gloucester, showed us a large vase and explained that it was a "Jewish Communion Bowl". That certainly was a new twist to religion for me, and like a fool I told him so.

We also spoke of plantation personalities, and Aunt Cammie spoke of old Aunt Jane who had been born a slave in Alabama and brought to Jane River as a girl, and who ultimately died here at Melrose after having lived long with Aunt Cammie. One of her expressions which Aunt Cammie never did exactly understand was "The child was born and named Anthony", which somehow had something similar in character to "The pig's killed and now hot water". The later is obvious, of course, since it is imperative to scald the pig just as soon as he is killed in order that the bristles may be removed, but what the child named Anthony being born has to do about anything, I do not understand.

Supper came and went in a hurry and after working all afternoon at my machine, I was glad to go to bed early, too.



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Feb. 7th - Ash Wednesday.

Now that Lent has started, the weather seems to be happier about the general situation, for today the sun was sure to rise as I peered out my great window before dawn, for the sky was starry and the mocking birds were going a mile a minute.

Frank came a little earlier, and I was glad because I wanted to do a lot of work where I left off yesterday.

Dinner still without the grace of the ladies, and afterward I took coffee with them. J. H. came in to announce that Father Baumgarten who has been at the little St. Etienne church here on Cane River is being transferred to Shreveport after 25 years of service at Elrose where he had thought he would always stay. He is to be replaced by Father somebody whom they say has been resident of Duquesne University of Pittsburgh for the past ten years. His new post will certainly be different, I should imagine.

The Madam had dictated an article for me in the morning, and in the afternoon we read it together with Betty and Miss Nellie sitting in. They seemed to like what I had done on Windy Hill.

The mail brought me all sorts of nice things from New York including a fine pair of pants which I immediately had to try on after dumping a coffee, heavily thicked with sugar, in my lap.

Supper alone again, and afterward a brief goodbye to Betty who was leaving for her home in Austin.

The Madam and I talked for a while, and at about seven I said goodnight, and folded up my beard.

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February 8th, - Thursday.

The sun broke through again this morning, shortly after Frank had come and gone. I hope we may continue to have some hint of sunshine and warmer weather, for possibly that will help the slowing up of the wave after wave of colds and influenza which seems to be devastating everything except slow motion in cabin and big house alike.

I got out a batch of mail before ten o'clock when the Madam came over to have coffee with me. It is good to see her up and about again, but I'm afraid she has no concept of how she should take care of herself.

She confided a secret to me. It seems that while talking with Mrs. Moore in Natchez on Saturday, that lady told her that as a research worker, she was undertaking the presentation of all historical data on Fort Rosalie for Mr. Nixon who is now here from his home in Paris and who plans to restore old Fort Rosalie, and Mrs. Moore further told the Madam that as a recompense for her labor, she had undertaken the job with the understanding that I should be made curator of the Museum when it was completed.

Of course this bit of intelligence set the Madam and me off into gales of laughter, as we pictured me each evening at sundown and each morning at dawn, firing a blast from the cannon, as I suppose would be in order if the old fort were to be restored. Personally I think it quite daring of Mrs. Moore to enter into such an arrangement as concerns me while insisting that the position she is to carve out for me shall remain a secret from me until, I suppose, Fort Rosalie is served up on a silver platter. Truly, there is no place in the world like Natchez.

Before dinner I took a little walk along Cane River, stopping one or twice to look in on mulatto friends, but being withal disappointed that so many of them are staggering along under colds.

There was depressing mail from Manhattan which lead us into an equally depressing wail over certain set-ups which man can never quite comprehend the wisdom for their creation.

I worked steadily all afternoon on correspondence and Natchez notes, and was glad when supper time came and to find the Madam well enough to join us at table.

In the evening we read for a while before the Franklin stove. Ingraham is the volume on which we are concentrating at the moment, and liking it withal.

As rain had set in during the afternoon, and everything was inclined toward chills, we said goodnight early and so bed.



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February 9th - Friday.

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I had intended to take a long walk this morning early, but the rains descended all night, and when Frank arrived before dawn he said I had better not try to go out as it was still raining and the roads were fairly under water.

And so I spent the morning at my typewriter.

Dinner came and went and after that the mail with a letter from Betty, saying that her husband had met her in Dallas and that they were staying there until her fever subsided, for it seems she had a cold journey and was accomplishing her several undertakings in Dallas under difficulties.

In the afternoon the Madam read from The Colonization Societies publications of 1834, and we were delighted to run across the name of the S.S. Harriet on which the Prince had sailed for Liberia, as well as many particulars regarding the efforts of the Society to transport people of color back to Africa. I was impressed by the statement of one prominent politician of the time who pointed out that the purpose of the Society, in part, was to save the "manners and morals" of the negro by providing a place for him to live in Africa. Another point that impressed me was the provision made by the society that the emancipated slave would be given a choice as to which particular place,--Canada, Liberia or wherever outside the United States,--premitting the negro to chose the place he wished to take up his new life. Considering the fact that the average negro living in this locality a hundred years later, after having enjoyed his freedom for 80 years hasn't the vaguest notion in regard to any place 15 or 20 miles from home, I am wondering just how much good judgement the slave of 1835 could summon up in selecting another country for himself to spend the rest of his life. There is of course of John McDonough who engineered a sharp bargain whereby his slaves, through working overtime bought their own freedom after 15 years or so of labor. These went back to Africa, but no sooner had they landed that they sent messages back to "Dear Papa", asking if they might come back and be his slaves again. But that of course is just a detail.

At supper everyone expressed their enthusiasm for the new cook, McKinley. For three night in succession, he has served deserts, which pleases me no end, and this is an innovation, since sweets are not of the usual menu at Melrose. How far away Elmer and her confused cuisine seem to have faded in less than a week.

In the evening the Madam and I read from Ingraham until eight when we said goodnight. I listened the the World Championshi bout, with Joe Louis retaining his boxing crown, and so to bed.

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February 10th - Saturday.

Up and abroad before the sun, hoping to take a good long walk but getting no where fast, what with the vast variety of mud puddles and quadmires that bogged down the Montrose road. And so back home before seven, with shoes twice their normal enormity by the great cakes of mud that I had collected before reaching the Cane River bridge.

But the sun is high and a cold wind is blowing, so I expect that by Sunday or Monday I can easily take off again with more impunity.

Yesterday when Sister and the Dr. were here, they spoke of a negro, living on the place who is suffering from a serious case of double pneumonia. His name is Brown and his cabin is several miles away down on Little River in the neighborhood of the Melrose pecane orchards. After having suffered from the malady for nine days, some of his kin folk yesterday loaded him on a slide,--stone-boat,-- installing him in the cabin of the Hachet boys, near the big road. Here the Dr. called on him, complaining that it is difficult to do much for any one who has had pneumonia for nine days. He gave him some sort of medecine which has a vague chance to getting to work, although the odds are scarcely even.

This morning Sam Brown, who is no kin but lives nearby came to take up my ashes. He had a report on the sick man. It seems that the Hachets took care of him last night, doing their best to keep him warm and quiet, but it seems the sick man wanted to sit up during the evening, and so they put him in a chair by the fireside for a considerable period. What is the thermometer below freezing and the cabins inclined to be drafty, I doubt if this excuriosn did a man suffering from double pneumonia much good. After he went back to bed, it seems that he didn't feel so good and vomited considerably. It would look as though their might be a funeral service for Brown shortly.

Frank came with my breakfast while Sam was giving me the details, and after Sam had left, Frank explained that "des folks aint no 'count". It seems that the sick man is inclined toward the bottle, and during the recent snow, he spent more than one evening parading up and down the lane in his shirt sleeves, too drunk to know what he was doing and yet not drunk enough to pass out, although he did stay out in the snow all night more than once. His wife, it seems, has long hoped that he would die anyway, and on several occasions when he has been in various stages of intoxication, has shoot at him from distance. I believe she has always missed, but there is a possiblity that he may have received a flesh wound recently,--about the time the pneumonia, although I am not certain on this point.

This pugnacious attitude on the part of the wife recalls a similar attintude on the part of Clemence who on several occasions has taken her husband in hand when he has been



Feb. 10th, - concluded.

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totting the bottle. But Clemence does 't resort to the gun, but goes in for the butcher knife instead. When her husband comes home after drinking, she gets out the knife and starts carving him up a bit. The husband gets scared, and enreats his wife to bind up his wounds for him,--which she eventually does. Then she puts him in bed, and brandishing her knife, tells him that he is going to stay there until she tells him he can get up, or else..... And there he stays, for once he tried disobeying her, and she actually went after him and did some more carving, and so his lesson was learned once and for all. The Madam has always declared that Clemence was as big a rascal as ever lived on cane river, and withal as clever an individual, I suppose. Clemence who can't read a line, who never went to school, who is an expert seamstress, a painter of pictures of the French modernist type, and withal of quality, the maker of the clever dolls, duplicating the appearance of many a personality, one of the few people in the region who can spin,--yet will not except under pressure, the mother of a child or two who are orphans, and also the wife who wields a mighty butcher knife. It would be interesting to know some of her other accomplishments, for I suppose they may well be as many more and as varied as I have discovered up to the present writing.

I stopped in the kitchen for a moment this morning, and enjoyed hearing the reaction of the darkies to last night broadcast of the prize fight. Henry asked me: "Did you hear the radio last year when Louis fit Galento?" I notice that all the people of color use fit for the past tense of fight, which sounds quite like good sense, I must say.

Sister and the Dr. came in the afternoon. Sister surprised me by announcing that in her opinion Betty wasn't sick at all during the days preceeding her departure, but was merely acting so to get attention. I gather that the Dr. doesn't like Betty whom he feels doesn't respect his conclusions as to her good health which she though not so good, thanks to the influenza. I suppose the Dr. would be surprised if he knew how his wife had appraised him to Betty, which certainly would not have helped to carve out a high niche in Betty's opinion in advance of her connection with him in a professional way.

In the evening Madam read to me for a while from Ingraham's account of "atchez Society in 1835. We both liked it but for myself I much more relished the things the Madam had to tell me of her Mother and what the latter recalled of the old days. With a life span stretching from 1840 to 1935, Aunt Cammie's mother remember more details of plantation life in the old South than most people could read about in a lifetime.

February 11th - Sunday.

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Summer came back today, with much yardage of blue sky, gobs of sunshine and plenty of balm southwest winds. A few days of this kind of weather and the blasted shrubs and withered grasses out to take on a new life.

Everything got under way a little later than usual because, I suppose, Frank as main spring for the household was a little later than usual,--the only time in months that his arrival in the morning had varied in the slightest. When he arrived and I remarked upon the hour, he chuckled and said he had over slept so that it was daylight when he jumped up with a start, and pointing out to his wife that it "already was "big day".

I put the treasure of colored glass on display so that I might enjoy it with my breakfast and so the Madam might share it with me when she came over for coffee. We remarked upon the Heavenly colors and one thing or another got us around to churches and darkies. She recalled that one of her "unts who owned a plantation of Bayou Cors Tete had been rather religiously inclined to the extent that she had her own church on the place and insisted that all the servants go to the service, conducted by her white minister, in the days before the war. After the war was finished, her "unt was somewhat taken aback when she heard her darkies rejoicing because now they were free and they wouldn't have to listen to a white man conduct the Sunday services. Now they could have services based on emotion and not on reason, and the singing could be shouting if they felt so moved.

Dinner came a little earlier than usual with eight or nine at table, including Charles "azurette from down little river way.

I took a little turn in the afternoon through the front garden, and spent the remainder of it at my typewriter. After everyone had left around seven, I called on Miss "ellie who is still kept to her room by her influenza, and a while after dark the Madam and I made a tour of the several houses, closing windows and doors, in anticipation of a possible wind and rain storm during the night.

Sunday is such a trying day that we were both ready to retire early, but we read until a little after eight from Ingraham's South West, thoroughly enjoying his picture of Natchez as described in 1835. One interesting point he made was that slaves were permitted to spend the day,--Sunday,--in town, coming from plantations in the environs of the city. Neither the Madam nor I had ever heard of such Sabbath freedom for slaves to spend the day in town in other localities. At four o'clock, a bell was run as a kind of slave curfew, and the darkies flew home, since a severe penalty was meted out for those who were found loitering about after the bell had been tolled.

I listened to the radio for a little while, and by 10:30 was asleep.



February 12<sup>th</sup> - Monday.

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Up a little after six and withal enchanted to discover that another fine day was in store and that there had been no storm during the night.

As soon as Frank had brought me coffee, I started out for a walk, crossing the river bridge before sun-up and so on to Montrose.

I covered quite a distance, talking here and there with various people. On my way back, walking from Natchez, Louisiana, a school bus stopped and asked if I didn't want a ride. I was delighted, but he only went about five miles when his route took him off the main highway, and so I left him at Cypress. The driver told me that if I would wait at that point, another school bus would be along shortly and would doubtlessly pick me up. But I didn't wait and kept going straight along in the big road. After a mile or so, however, the other bus did come along, and so I rode on to Montrose with him. Starting up the lane toward Melrose, an ancient Ford came chunking along, and it stopped for me. It contained ~~three~~ three women, and they were good enough to bring me all the way home, although it was slightly out of their way in the final lap.

Frankly I was glad when this last leg of this journey was completed for I was rather uncertain as to the stability of the old Curiosity in which I was perched. At every rut the old frame shuddered and the engine heaved and sighed alarmingly, while the exhaust pipe must have been contorted in such a manner as to exhale the gas in the car itself, and saved we were, I believe, merely because the breeze swept through the faulty windows so furiously.

Charles was here for dinner again, and at one he and J. B. and Dan left for New Orleans for two or three days.

In the afternoon I ran over to see Lelaine for a little while, taking along a bottle of Nucro as a builder-upper for them. I think it is about half whiskey and half beef stock or something of the sort. I found them both very feeble, and neither of them could remember that Robina had been their the week before with food and what not she had brought from the city for them. They both were unhappy about the care they had received at the hands of Kate, the "eather and the Dr. Lelaine said that she had been having "lunonia in the top of her head" again, and that she had had colic in her crop, too, but the latter had responded to the very excellent treatment she had given it,--a good swallow of linament before going to bed. I believe this is the first time I have heard of linament for internal use, but there are still loads of things for me to learn. Lelaine explained that linament taken internally was splendid for chickens with cholera, but I wouldn't know about that either.

Back home for supper which was early and gay, and so to reading until about eight when I said good night. At ten I took a little walk,--filled with wonder at the set-up which obtainshereabouts.

February 13<sup>th</sup>, - Tuesday.

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Yesterday's sun gave way to showers this morning with a chill wind that seemed more like one of those March days of New England than the advent of Spring in the South.

Up a little after seven, I ran through my appointed rounds and was at my typewriter before seven thirty to bang off considerable mail before coffee time.

Henry came to call early and take my radio which had gone out of kilter, and while he was here we spoke of a shelf he is going to put up outside my great window where I can keep in close touch with the cardinals and sparrows, thrushes and whatever that will come to feed there.

The Madam sent McKinley over to ask me to have coffee with her, during which we spoke much of Natchez, and especially of Charles and Myrtie Byrne and their lovely home called Cherokee. The Madam is writing to them today regarding Pirates Beard as an excellent type of plant to use on their terraces to keep the soil firm,--the Cherokee retaining wall having been washed out during the first winter rain.

Dinner was gay with the reduced number at table, starting out as we did with only four, to be joined shortly thereafter by Celeste who is staying here while her husband is in New Orleans.

Miss Nellie, Celeste and I talked for some time after luncheon while still at table, the Madam flying around in the kitchen, as I supposed. But when I returned to my maisonette, I discovered that the Madam had been busy over here with Henry while we had lingered at the board, and that during the interim she had had her radio moved over to take the place of mine which had to go to town for tube-testing. This is so typical of the Madam's thoughtfulness, kindness and generosity that I merely sight it as a further example of those qualities which have endeared her to so many. It in a way explains, too, a point that Celeste brought up at dinner. She remarked that while in Mexico City, someone wanted her and J. B. to meet some people living there. When the latter had been advised that the Henrys were in town, they asked if they were of the Cammie Henrys, and when told that it was so, they rushed into the rendezvous whole heartedly.

The rain ceased falling shortly after noon, but the wind was so cold that I decided to stay in and work rather than taking the air. Supper came a little before five, and we retired to the Franklin stove for three hours thereafter. The sitting was interrupted by Sister who blew in for a few minutes, to report that the Brown pneumonia suffer was being taken to the Natchitoches hospital because treatment by his kin-folk didn't seem to be of the wisest nurses in the world,--they having given him steak to eat yesterday, and this, I gathered, was a bit heavy for a man hovering on the edge of life and death.

For a while we spoke of Dr. Janet Miller, eccentricities, and so to bed.



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February 14th - Wednesday.

"nother fine day with much ozone to impell one from bed and through the gardens before sun-up to see how the come back of the flowers is making it.

I took a little tour around the African House to peak through the fence where the lake is going to be - eventually, - and Grandpa and Snow, the white bull dog accompanied me. It seems like a stragg pair of walking companions, for Grandpa

is as quiet a cat as I have ever known, and he only makes conversation when I stop and wait for him to catch up. Snow on the other hand is perpetually frisking about, leaping up to sniff at any budded branch that may strike his fancy or stoop here and there to snort at an passing clump of daffodills that he wants to turn into some vicious foe, to be barked at and roughed up. It certainly is hard on the daffodills but now seems to get great satisfaction in conquering them.

The "adam came over for coffee, boundless in her radiance of good health and good cheer, curiously adept in concealing the fact that she slept but fitfully last night,--and brushing that aside as of entirely unworthy of consideration. Celeste came a few minutes later, and after coffee, we drove along Cane "iver. I stopped off at "elines while the "adam and Celeste went on to "adame "ubert-Rocque's, promising to pick me up on their way back.

I found "eline and Joe quite feeble, and Edward atx by the fireside with them, suffering from a cold. The usual number of chickens, cats and dogs hovered about the embers, too, although the sun was so warm outside, I believe all the fireside-sitters would have been better out of doors. "eline made me some coffee, which the others had just finished, and we talked of many things, starting out with their state of health. "eline has always been so cordial in receiving me that it has always been a pleasure for me to call on her, listen to her strange stories, and observe the gorgeous ability to laugh which she always maintains even through serious illness. Yesterday she gave me quite a speech about people who came to see her when she was sick, telling me that she got some good out of my visits, which of course flattered me. Since she has to give money to people who make professional visits, in spite of the fact that she is more spiritually depressed than physically improved by their call, she told me that she felt it only fair that she pay me for my visits which did her much good, and she scurried around and brought out a bill which she tried to give me. I of course laughed at her for being so silly and told her if she really wanted to make me happy she could get in touch with St. "nthonny and see to it that he located "unt "ammie's keys to her armoire for her.

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Feb. 14th Wed. - concluded.

"eline then went on with accounts of various illnesses that she had known in her family, and branched off into a bed side scene which made us all chuckle. "t seems that during the "onfederate war, the "ankee soldiers used to visit not only the big houses for plunder but also the cabins as well, carrying away dishes, blankets, kitchen utensils or any articles that might take their fancy or any food that might be in evidence. After a few such raids, "eline's family was down to its last pig, and in hopes of getting some food before the porker disappeared in the same manner as their chickens, ducks and turkeys had gone, they killed the pig one morning. but just as they were about to carve it up, some "ankees appeared " riding down the road. "eline's family had visions of their " last porker disappearing the way the rest of the food had gone, but "eline's mother proved her resourcefulness by having the pig wrapped in a sheet and put into bed. Then she covered it up with " blankets, and kneeling beside the bed, began to cry and carry on. "his scene reached its high point at about the moment the "ankees arrived. They rumaged through the cabin, looking for anything that might be liftable or edible, but paid little attention to "eline's mother and what they took to be the patient with whom she seemed so concerned. After pocketing some biscuits and some spoons they rode off. The family got busy on the "patient" and so fresh pork was on the table that day for dinner, and the rest of the porker was hidden away from the next pair of prying eyes that might come that way.

Shortly after I had finished my second cup of coffee, the "adam arrived with "eleste, and the three of us drove on to call on Father "aumgarten, who leave his post here to make way for the "resident of "uquesne "niversity who arrives today..

Back home for dinner to find "oss "haris here. "e has come for a couple of days to do some research, as he writes for newspapers on historical portraits and sketches, primarily concerning early "exas-"ouisiana border disputes, etc.

"iss "ellie worked with me during the afternoon until four thirty when "oss and I took a ride along "ane "iver as far as "erry and back, via "ontrose. "upper followed and in the evening the "adam read from "ngraham until eight when "oss joined us for conversation from which I withdrew to my house to listen to the "red "llen programme. It was nice to contemplate the little silver jar full of daffodills and white hyacinthes which the "adam had brought me earlier in the day, but I wished I might share them with others in "ew York where the radio said it was snowing madly, with all the north-east in the grip of a heavy wind and snow storm. . And so to bed.



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February 15<sup>th</sup> - Thursday.

Curious weather this morning, chilly with low-hanging clouds but obviously with no likelihood of rain. It seems more like autumn this moment than spring, and yet the silver vase of daffodills and white hyacinthes on my desk here before me is proof enough that a renaissance of the gardens is in the offing.

Miss "ellie came over early to read, and the "adam made a round to say good morning, too.

Miss "ellie had had quite a chat with Mr. Pharis, and wanted me to see him again before noon, for I believe he will get away shortly after dinner.

The noon mail brought a couple of nice "alenties and a letter or two of interest, but letters arrive rather more slowly these days, much depending upon the general unsettled weather possibly, and in part upon me for writing so infrequently.

In the afternoon I went over to Zelina's to see how she and Joe were come along and to take a few little packages of clothing and medicine which the "adam wanted to get to them. I found them both up and about, but just about,--not more. "Edward was there, too, and a little boy of 10 or 12, "Edward's brother, possibly, and all the family was sniffing with colds. The house was darker than Egypt, save for the tiny fire on the grate, for the windows,--which are without panes of glass, are boarded up and the front door is kept closed because of the cold southwest wind. Zelina offered me a chair by the fire, but it was so dark I couldn't see it, and so I accordingly sat on a dog,--much to the latter's surprise and my own.

I got back home a little before supper, and found that several little things had frayed the nerves of the household considerably. Somebody from L. S. W. had blown in unexpectedly, asking the Madam for material of some kind or other, and this ruffled the Madam a little, since the visitor hadn't had the courtesy to write or telephone of their intended visit, and in consequence the Madam had to forego all the several undertaking she had at the boiling point to take care of the guest.

On another front there was commotion, for there were a collection of mechanics fussing with the lighting system, in preparation for disconcerting certain currents that supply the waterheater, and to this was added certain tradespeople who arrived during the same hour to consult the "adam on different points.

At the same time a smoldering feud between Frank and Sam Brown burst into flame. And that in itself was just a series of petty annoyances that eventually seem to drive folks crazy. It seems that Sam Brown has resented Frank since Sam's nephew was sent from

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his garden job to work in the field, Sam feeling, I suppose that Frank is in better standing with the Madam than he. The other day as I was going up the back stairs, I saw a hat on the ground beside the post. I imagined that the hat had either been thrown away or that I might have been knocked off the post by the police dog who tried to knock off a cane of food I had placed on the same spot the evening before.

In any event, it seems that the hat belonged to Sam Brown, and seeing red, in view of foregoing situations, he asked Frank if he knocked it off the post. Frank said he didn't.

Later Sam Brown told Bud and Henry that he "would water the yard" with Frank if he found out if Frank had knocked his hat down. That evening Frank and his wife started for Church, and at that moment Frank missed his "Sunday" hat, remembering that he had left it in the kitchen of the big house. And so this morning, first thing, Frank went to get his hat, and discovered that it had disappeared sometime during the past twenty-four hours. Obviously he assumed that Sam was the nigger in the woodpile.

And so it was that this explosive reached the Madam's ears at just the time her own program was in confusion, and so she cleared the decks and promised a straightening out of the matter on the morrow.

After supper we started to read before the Franklin stove but were interrupted when Celeste came in with much news from town, and later the boys came back from the Cotton meeting in New Orleans and Baton Rouge, and so I said goodnight, and so to bed.



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February 16th, - Friday.

Another day of low hanging clouds and rain. I had hoped to take a long walk early this morning, but relinquished the thought when Frank arrived at dawn and told me that the roads would be too muddy to get anywhere.

I accordingly stuck to my typewriter, knocking off a lot of things until I glanced at the clock and discovered that it was ten-thirty.

As coffee is always at ten, I concluded that I must have been forgotten, proving conclusively enough that Frank must be busied elsewhere since he never forgets.

And so I went over to the big house and found the Madam, seemingly gay and triumphant over the heart-aches that are hers these days. Both she and Miss Ellie had thought I had taken to the big road which accounted for my "absent treatment".

Dinner, and we dined without the Madam as her headache was of such a nature as to make absence of food seem the more desirable, although I presume that it was the realization of discord around the board that kept her from joining the family.

There was lots of nice mail, especially from the New York area, both in letters and in publications. Miss Nellie and I ran through some of these,--of which I particularly enjoyed the article in Life on Eleanor Roosevelt. From it I gather that Mrs. Roosevelt is steadily growing in popularity and there is the statement that she is the greatest First Lady since Dolly Madison. The thought flitted through my mind that as early as 1933 or 34, I had written somewhere that Mrs. Roosevelt would eventually take a unique place in American literature, probably to figure frequently as a kind of female Haroun-al-Rachid. The reading of this article indicated that the trend was in this direction.

In the afternoon Miss Ellie and I read from Claiborne's History of Mississippi on Cotton and particularly on Dr. Rush Nutt's contribution to its culture.

Supper came and went somewhat under a pall, what with the Madam still in seclusion. In the evening we read for a little before her Franklin stove until J. A. came in for a little chat during which he told us much of the enormous gambling that goes on in New Orleans. A couple of nights before he had been at one of the places, where nightly hundreds of men and women,--old and young alike, hazard from one dollar to thousands at the tables and slot machines. One Texas rancher lost eighty one thousand dollars, and young bank clerks were petting hundred dollar bills on a turn of a card. Such is the state of things in New Orleans in this year of grace, 1940.

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February 17th - Saturday.

No walking this morning, what with the state of the roads after the continuous rain that has fallen since yesterday and is still falling.

Frank came before daylight with my coffee, and I was scarcely out of my shower before he was back with my breakfast. I like having the decks cleared so early,--there is so much more time to do things the rest of the day.

I like the little visits I have with Frank, Sam and others that are usually a little longer when the hour is earlier, too. One interesting detail I learned this morning that concerned life in one of the negro cabins on the place was about the ex-cook, Elmer, who still lives,--I know not how,--in a cabin down the lane. It seems that the deputy Sheriff, Black visited her again yesterday, and slapped and knocked her about the place, trying to make her tell where her husband, who had killed the white man some time back, was hiding. I feel sorry for poor Elmer, for I am convinced she knows nothing about the negro's whereabouts, and I can't think why she should be thus hounded unless it be for the sheer pleasure the white trash get in being cruel. I understand she was kept on the rack for a couple of hours before the man left the cabin, whereupon Elmer flitted out with her three children. I expect she went down to Montrose where some relative lives. This is not the first visit Black has made upon her, but they say this is the first one he made in company with another person,--someone from the F.B.I., who is checking up on Elmer's husband.

Elmer's mother in law lives next door to her but doesn't speak, nor does she aid in watching out for Elmer's children, but it would appear that she does know where her son is, for some days ago she went to Alexandria, after selling some cattle, and sent a money order to her son in California. I believe the amount was \$58.00. When the murderer crossed the state line, they say his case became subject to the concern of the Federal Bureau, that he first went to Arkansas and later to California. Possibly the long arm of the law will catch will get him.

interruption!

And finally the day drizzled out with the rain and we read for a while in the evening, I said good night, and eventually went to bed.



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February 18th - Sunday.

Up as usual a bit before seven as soon as Frank had brought my early morning coffee and refurnished my fire. The rain of yesterday seems to have come to a temporary halt but gray mists shroud everything and it's a good day to stay inside.

Before I had made a tour of the gardens, Miss Nellie had left for Shreveport with the Dr. and Sister, in order that she may cast her ballot for Jones on Tuesday.

The Madam came over for coffee at ten, and we spent the morning taking down material from the Ingraham book. We had frequent rests spells, however, as this and that darkie came to see the Madam on one reason or another. A huge old darkie called Gustin was one of the callers. He lives down at Henryville and seems to have known the Madam for ever so long. It was good to hear them reminisce about houses and people whom they had known and still are acquainted with in that locality, some four or five miles below here between Elrose and Derry. I believe much of the property in that locality is now owned by Fanny Guillot who lives in the atrocious gingerbread that old man Henry had designed and made in New Orleans and then sent up here for erection. It is said that it was built with Louisiana Lottery money which bubbled and stewed sometime after the Confederate War. According to Gustin, and others, Miss Fanny has just sold the major part of the plantation to the Government as a camp site of some kind. I believe the price was something like one hundred and sixty thousand dollars. I suppose the Guillot place, the Hertzog place and the Henry empire are the three largest in this section. As near as I can figure it out, the Guillots and Hertzogs are the big tax payers in the Parish, while the Henry's,--that is J. A. is the money maker.

There were only three for dinner, --the Madam, Eugene and I,-- the smallest table I have ever known at Elrose, but the set up was worthy of aspiration.

In the afternoon the Madam and I continued work in my maisonette until a little after three when the Madam took a short nap after Frank had served coffee and a nice desert. Shortly thereafter telegrams came in that required attention and telephone messages that required further use of the same instrument. Mrs. McKilheney wired from Avery Island that her husband Rufus, had died. The Madam was so fond of this branch of the McKilheney family and always, like everyone who knows about it, feels that he did a magnificent work in making possible the Bird Sanctuary at Avery Island so that the Aigrette was saved from extinction. I hope lots of people read his Autobiograph of an Aigrette, for everything in the aviary line will mean something more to the readers than ever before.

The Madam and I supped in her room, saw sister for a few seconds on her return from Shreveport, and then read for a little while from divers plantation papers. At eight I said goodnight, intending to listen to the radio but slept, eventually, instead.

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February 19th - Tuesday.

Up and abroad a little after six. The sky, at last, is blue but the roads of course were muddy a plenty. I came near being stuck in the mud, as a matter of fact, when I stepped to the road side to let a school bus pass me on the lane, but to my surprise, the driver didn't pass, for he stopped and invited me to ride. There were possibly fifteen youths and maidens of highschool age on board and it was a revelation to hear them chatter with all that effervescence that characterizes the young people of that stage in their upward path. I don't know how far these busses cover the country side to transport the students but this one must cover quite an area since I rode twenty miles with the perpetual excitement.

After, after I had said goodbye and gone my way, another car stopped for me and this proved to be Sheriff Aine who whisked me back to Montrose, and thence I staggered up the oozing lane.

I left my shoes on my front gallery, they were so muddy, and flew over in a fresh pair to have a little good morning programme with the Madam. Frank appeared shortly thereafter, bearing a tray with my coffee,--for I had missed the ten o'clock serving by arriving home at eleven, and there was a glass of milk too. It seems that the servants all and always know what's going on, while Frank is different for he seems to anticipate. Having seen me turn in from the big road, he had had a new fire laid in my fireplace, instructed Sam Brown to shine my shoes and had himself prepared my tray. I must admit the Madam is quite right when she refers to Frank as "Your pet".

A piece or two of mail, and dinner with much good mail for desert,--New York, New Orleans and Porto Rico brining surprise all around.

In the afternoon, Tony came over to clean some of the treasure which has been kept wrapped in my maisonette in a large part, since the famous expedition the Madam and I made.

Supper and afterward the Madam and I made a tour of the front gardens, noting what the frost had killed, and each evidence bring forth the observation from the Madam that it was alright, for it would give her other plants a better chance, and at the same time offer her an opportunity to plant things that the cold wouldn't harm. Her re-action to such calamities is always so magnificent, I suppose it is one of the primary colors that makes her personality so vivid and unique.

We read until eight from Isaac Franklin's biography, and so goodnight. I must ask her about the Reverend Sauerwell.



February 20th, - Tuesday.

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It was chilly when I awoke about six, and I was glad to hear Frank's's step and realize that hot coffee and a good fire was in the immediate offing.

I was sorry to hear that Frank's voice was hoarse, and that the weather was still cloudy and cold.

I worked on mail until about ten when the Madam sent me an invitation to have coffee with her and Celeste. We didn't take it leisurely, as J. A. was waiting with Charles Mazurette to take the ladies to the polling place to cast their ballots for Sam Jones. Once seated in the car, the Madam remarked that it was a new one, and asked J. A. if it was the new one he bought for himself in New Orleans the other day. He said it wasn't but that it was the "adam's new car." "That's alright, darlin', she responded. "Just don't wear it entirely out before I have a chance to go down to South Louisiana". It is a standing joke in the family that the "adam never knows what kind of a car she owns and sometimes months go by without her even seeing it.

The votes were cast at Montrose, and afterward J. A. asked if we would like to take a little ride as far as Derry and up home by the river road. I suppose the distance was 15 or twenty miles. We agreed that it would be pleasant, and the mere fact that the car had no licenses on it whatsoever was just a detail.

We passed by Henryville and J. A. pointed out a piece of 20 acres which he had recently sold on the main highway. I believe it had cost 400 dollars and he sold it for 2000. On the river road, we discussed the different properties along the way, the five miles of river front that the Hertzsogs and Magnolia had once owned, the numerous parcels that mulattoes own outright at the present time. J. A. remarked that the estate owned a piece of land through that section somewhere but that he had never been quite sure just where it was, as he has always rented the property from year to year. In view of the extent of Henry holdings in land, I suppose it is no wonder one might not be quite sure where all of it might be located, but it does seem a little fantastic, nevertheless.

I worked pretty steadily all afternoon save for a few minutes to say hello to Sister and meet Mr. Kaiser of the Matouhe and some Judge and his wife from New Orleans who had called on Aunt Jammie to have a look at Melrose. It would appear, however, that Melrose held little for them except as an excuse to quizz the "adam on the Saxon family. They got nothing.

After supper the madam and I read from Natchez documents, land transfers of the Spanish era and a variety of notes which

Feb. 20th - con.

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Mrs. Moore had taken from time to time. There were a couple of the same page which was devoted primarily to the graveyard of Gloucester, hard by Longwood. One recorded the tombstone of "S.S. Prentice, the Poet" of course the fact that he was a lawyer is merely a detail, --and another reading "Son of S.S. Prentice, but no kin to the poet", and this was followed by the record engraved on the tombstone of Sargent, 1st Gov. of Mississippi, reading "Winthrop Sargent, born 1754, died 1818 but not under it". I reckon she had intended to indicate that Sargent died and was buried at sea, but the note wouldn't make very clear reading.

We spoke of Frank, whom the "adam sent home at noon, for he was developing a fever and was obviously quite ill. Robina had sent me a grand box of peanut brittle which she had made herself. It came in the noon mail, and I was accordingly glad to send some of this along to Frank, not that he would be likely to eat it but I presumed his wife and children would, and that would do Frank good.

I said goodnight to the Madam about eight and folded up my beard and slept so well I never did hear how the election was running in the State's attempt to break the corruption that dominates the Long machine now in power.



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February 21st - Wednesday.

The day started a little earlier, what with Frank being sick, and Tony taking over his father's labors for him. I suppose a change in routine brought morning coffee at a half hour in advance of the usual, unvarying hour that Frank usually serves it.

Henry came right after breakfast while I was feeding my pet turkeys to see about the shelf he is putting up outside my window for the birds to eat and where I can see them as I sit at my typewriter.

One thing I noticed in speaking with mulattoes hereabouts, they have a habit of making up the past tense of verbs that seem to be rather more reasonable than the curious differences between the sound of the present and past tense of the verb. For instance at the moment I recall such words as the verb "fight" which in the past they call "fit" or for the present "send" they say "sont" for the past. I recall Henry saying: "That chil' sure fit when I sont him back."

The Madam came over for coffee and we both talked a bit of yesterday's election and the returns indicating that Sam Jones was elected, contemplating for the moment on what life must seem like to those uneasily seated Long politicians who are likely to find plenty of ~~xxxx~~ investigation turned toward their incomes and performances in office when the new regime moves in in May or June..

We also spoke a little of Annie Rice,-- Cousin Annie, as the Madam calls her. It seems she died a day or so ago, leaving an estate of several millions. I believe she was a daughter of old Senator Gay who was butted off the upper deck of a Mississippi steamboat one time while arguing about pigs. I believe it was he, too, who wrecked Aunt Annie's people when he foreclosed on Lady Grove plantation. It seems that Aunt Annie with one of her children were somewhere once with Cousin Annie, and ginger snaps were purchased for one of the children.--Five cents worth of them. Later it was found that the gingersnaps were a little stale, and as everyone was on an outing, or picnic, suggested that they took the snaps aside, as they weren't very good. But Cousin Annie put her foot down, saying she would by all means take care of those snaps and take them back and make the grocer make good on them. She died eventually and left several million dollars.

Inner, and everyone enchanted over the turn in politics, with more exuberance on the opposite of the board than I have witnessed in many a day. And then came the mail, and lots of nice pieces from Manhattan.

I worked at my desk until four, and then took a brisk walk in the bracing wind that has been keeping down the full heat of the brilliant sunshine.

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Feb. 21st, - concluded.

Supper at five, with a little tour afterwards through the garden, and then with the Madam until eight, reading mulatto diaries of the Johnson family of Natchez.

Many entries were for the year 1836, just following the 1835 impressions as were recorded by Ingraham, and these side light very nicely round out and illuminate the picture of the city, as these notes come from a different strata of society.

There were some letters from New Orleans to Natchez mulattoes, written in 1866, and entertaining, too, not only from the curious expressions which these educated mulattoes used, but also because of hints as to certain aspects of social life in New Orleans at the time and among other things the stationing of negro troops in the city to carry out the decrees of the carpet-bag government. As mulattoes look with disdain upon the negro, I reckon that the people of color in New Orleans hated the sight of the straight negro in uniform twice as much as the whites probably did.

I had intended to listen to the radio a little but I feel asleep instead, not awakening until three o'clock when I thought it was dawn, what with the marvelous light of the moon. I went out on the gallery for a bit, but found it a little chilly to stay long. Grandpa had been staying out, but when he heard me on the gallery, he came galloping home and so parked on my feet until another beautiful night was done.



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February 2nd, -Thursday.

Up early to set my fire blazing merrily, and so back into bed again before Tony brought coffee about 6:30.

The "adam came over for coffee at 10 o'clock, and we feel to talking about the Hertzogs down at Magnolia Plantation.

The "ertzogs inherited the plantation from the Le Comptes,-- old "r. Ambrose LeCompte having come here early in the 1800, or possibly his father or grandfather may have planted cotton even in the 1700's. Somewhere Aunt "ammie has copies of early marriage contracts in the family journals. One interesting detail regarding "r. Ambrose's second marriage. When his first wife died, "r. Ambrose went to a millinery shop in "atchitoches to have a black-crepe ribbon draped on his hat, as was the custom in both "ouisiana and "ississippi in ante bellum days when a funeral was impending. As we left the millinery shop, the pretty seamstress said that she would be the next Mrs. Ambrose Hertzog. Within a year the marriage certificate proved the point that the lady was right.

I always get back to my typewriter with zest for life, and somehow the time ~~fly~~ flies by madly bet een the hour she says aurevoir until it's time for the 11:30 mail.

Dinner, and not so much mail, but the quality excellent, and afterward byack to my typewriter and a little chat with some of the "children of "trangers". We spoke of the Madam and how she had my little maisonette arranged when she had her weaving things here. "ut now she has loom in her house, in the loom house, in the bookbindry, and "eaven knows where all. "Looks like she done loom all over the place" was the way they put it.

When coffee came in mid afternoon, " asked for a third helping, but the bearer of the tray found that there wasn't a full cup left. "Garbiel done blow dat horn plumb out", was the way the case was covered.

"upper and much talk about a late arriving letter from the wife of the over-seer of "ncle Sam plantation saying that "ncle Sam goes into the "ississippi within two or three weeks. Uncle Sam, in my estimation, is one of the nobles and best laid out plantations in "ouisiana. The classic manner of its four sided gallerys, its set of two flanking smaller houses, like Greek temples, and then another set flanking those, and then in the rear a delicious set of garconieres, etc., etc. And within a week or so it will have disappeared from the face of the earth, and with it another high point in the remaining monuments

We read for a time before the great Franklin stove, contemplating the necessity for calling "obina in preparation for an expedition to visit Uncle "am before it has been completely broken down by the Baton "ouge contractors who being smashing it with a vengeance within the coming week. " wonder if anything will be rescued, the lovely weather vane, the huge punks, the lovely marble fireplaces, etc. And so good night.

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February 23rd, - Friday.

Tony arrived with hot coffee about 6:30, and so the day got under way at a reasonable hour.

I took a long walk in spite of the rather soggy condition of the roads, being twice offered a ride, and having once voluntarily boarded a T and P.

Back home before 10:30 to find that the Madam had not as yet returned from "loutierville where she had gone to get the baby to guard it for the day while the Dr. and his wife were in "Alexandria.

Got out a batch of mail before dinner after which the Madam and I went over the mail which wasn't especially heavy.

I worked until three when I took desert with the madam. Just as we got around to the coffee department, "rs. "and and "rs. "andolph,--sounds like a Vaudeville team, blew in from "Alexandria. There was much talk of the election, the winter weather and the effect it is having on the semi-tropical plants in gardens hereabouts.

They brought some splendid bouquests of "mperor deffodills and some magnificent "aponicas,--white and red,--solid colors.

I worked until supper time, which was a little late,--the cook understanding that he was to slow up for the arrival of the Wenks, but we dined before they arrived in a frayed sort of mood.

"hey left shortly afterward and the "adam read a bit from Natchez documents to me, but as she was tired, I said goodnight rather early.

I didNst listen to the radio, sleeping as I like to best, and awakening at three to let Grandpa in.



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February 24th - Saturday.

The clock struck six thirty, Tony appeared, a bright fire was soon blazing on the hearth and a cup of piping hot coffee was getting the day under way.

The clouds of yesterday still dampen the horizon and it's still gray dawn when Tony has returned with my breakfast tray.

I did some work on my typewriter, sitting by the great French window and letting my eyes wander from time to time onto the feeding shelf outside where a banquet is laid out for any passing cardinal or mocking bird.

At ten o'clock the Madam came for coffee with me and she was followed by Celeste. We took apart the doings of the plantation,-- Regis' grandmother died at four this morning, it seems, and so tonight will be a busy one in that cabin, what with the inevitable wake that always turns such a circumstance into a frolic.

A little before noon the rain fell in torrents, and I got pretty well soaked going out to the store with my mail.

After dinner I started skipping mud puddles down the road, as I wended my way towards Frank's cabin. I found him dressed and sitting by the fire, feeling better, I am glad, but withal a little peaked looking after his tussle with the influenza. His wife was busy in the well scrubbed living room and bed room which is one, and his daughter, a child of some sixteen summers, was working with her mother on a dress. She was getting things ready for tonight's wake which she will attend with Aunt Mammie's maid, Rita, the great grand daughter of the old mulatto woman who died.

I had afternoon coffee with the Madam on my return home, and we read a little from one of the "atchez newspapers. There was a short notice which made us both laugh. It read: "The citizens of Natchez are urged to visit the new sleeping restaurant and lounging car which is to run from Memphis to Natchez and from New Orleans to Natchez, beginning on March 3rd". Only in Natchez could such a notice appear in print. "Running ture to form", the Madam opined, as both of us tried to figure out what a "sleeping restaurant" might be like, and what the public is expected to do with it.

I worked for an hour, and took off my long beard before supper. Afterward the madam and I made a short tour of the gardens, read for an hour and at eight we said goodnight and I went immediately to bed.

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February 25th - ~~Saturday~~ <sup>Sunday</sup>

I awoke early this morning, what with having gone to bed so early last night.

A little after six, coffee arrived, and Tony had me a grand fire going within a few minutes. The coffee was delicious.

The Madam came over for coffee and we talked of plantation doings, and the big wake that Regis' grandmother figured in last night. The house was full of people they say, and what with the generous amount of fire-water, the party was still going at five o'clock this morning, so I believe everything points to success in the final services that will take place today. With the people of color so superstitious about death, I think it is doubly interesting to see how they dominate their doleful misgivings about the situation that arises when Death knocks for one of them by counter-acting their fears by the frolic they institute while the corpse remains in the house.

Dinner was small today, so far as went around the board, but large by way of food of which I ate far to heartily.

We decided to run out to Carolyn Dorman's place in the afternoon, what with the excellence of the weather and all. It is about 50 miles north of here, via Kampti, Black Lake and Chestnut. Turning off the main road, we drove a couple of miles down slowly sloping woodland, and after penetrating a gate, we curved gently toward the left where stands the Dorman's long low house, in the midst of a grove of inordinately tall pines.

Carolyn and Virginia were both at home, and they showed us about the several little fenced off areas and improvised greenhouses made of wooden slats all ranged in such disarray that they seemed as unstudied as a farm scene in a Curriere and Ives Print, and withal as far away and early American in a living setting.

The Madam and I wandered off through the woods, over a little knoll, and there on the other side found the delicious little lake, all surrounded by pines, and luxuriant shrubs. Carolyn has a trim little cabin over here where she paints and writes, far away from any sound of house and farm yard. The Dorman's first came into possession of this property in an early Spanish grant, and here they carry on their cultivation of flowers, the study of wild life, without interruption, the farm lying in the midst of the great forest preserve that surrounds them for miles. Carolyn works at Alexandria at the moment, having charge of the planting of things on the state properties in and about the city, while Virginia keeps the home fires burning during the week until Carolyn joins her on Friday evening.

Someone once said that give Carolyn a violet and she could, and even has rattled along for a couple of hours about it while hard pressed officials gasp at the seemingly endless chatter she can make.



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Feb. 25th - Sunday, cont.

The floor of Carolyn's cabin is riddled by termites, but that is something which will be corrected if the termites don't wreck the whole place before they get around to fix up that detail. The wildness of the wood, where brush grows too luxuriantly, made the madame and me turn over in our minds what we would do with the whole place if we once got our hands set to it. The madam then confessed to me that she had once rounded up a truck and a bunch of dusky helpers with a view of going out to Briarwood and cleaning up the undergrowth while Carolyn was away, but fortunately, she mused, she had realized before she started out that it was bad business fixing up other people's places for them and so she cancelled the whole project. I must say that Briarwood has loads of personality as it is, but with just a little pushing of things around, it could easily be one of the most delicious place in the world.

Carolyn showed me an extremely rare yew seedling that she was nursing. It came from Apolatchicola River basin in north Florida, where it seems this pre-historic tree grows,--it being the only place in the world where a tree of this particular variety is to be found. If Carolyn is successful, she'll have the only other one in the world growing at Briarwood. She told me that she had a week last summer to spend in that region and to consult with a number of prominent botanists, but when the week was finished she discovered that she had forgotten all about her appointments with the botanists, but had had a wonderful time with the flora of that locality.

The madam says that loads of distinguished visitors find their way to this hidden spot. Once a little while back the madam called one day and found the front of the house clogged with cars from far and near, with a whole row of distinguished naturalists fascinated with the specimens of wild flowers ranged along the low gallery of the house, with Carolyn in the midst of the whole business, while Virginia was passing out punch of some kind, not at all abashed by the inconvenience of scarcity of glasses, so that great doers of things with plants were drinking punch out of preserve jars and what not, and altogether enchanted with Carolyn and her treasure of rare flowers and plants. I understand that Carolyn used to be in touch with Thomas Edison when we was at work on turning golden rod into rubber, and of course her book on Louisiana wild flowers, her authoritative study on Indianas, her efforts to secure,--almost single handedly the several state parks hereabouts, and her great interest in the Mesota markers across the Gulf States have given her a certain prominence, but as the madam puts it, what makes both Carolyn and Virginia different from the average run of buisicuits out from the same mould in the fact that both are intensely interested in doing things, and so we have the spectacle of these two women living fifty miles from nowhere in the heart of a forest and in the midst of a wood, and the world gets an inspiration just from the light that they kindle in this far away off the beaten track spot where life is fuller because of them and their desire to make things grow.

Home by six, supper and a little chat before the Franklin stove and so to bed.

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February 26th - Monday.

Spring seems to have broken through at last. When Frank arrived at 6:30, the sky was clear with a waning moon and the temperature was mounting as though to combine forces with an advancing sun.

I spent the morning working at my machine, distracted from time to time by the little flocks of gayly plumed birds that graced by embryo bird sanctuary on the other side of my great window. Thank Heavens the turkeys haven't found the food lay out there as yet, for with four or five of them to descend on it, I am sure it would go to glory.

Dinner in reduced numbers, and after that the mail, and so back to my typewriter until coffee time when I joined the Madam for dessert, etc.

For supper came Mr. Ploucher of New Orleans, a spry little man who has been with the same cotton brokerage for the past thirty-five years.

As operators of this brokerage firm and of other large real estate holdings, the Stewarts have accumulated a great fortune, and incidentally, according to report, are ultra conservative in their expenditures. They own Oak Alley, that lovely property on the Mississippi with the famous avenue of live oaks. To keep out many a visitor, according to M. Ploucher, they have had to put up a sign stating that the admission fee to the house is fifty cents. Other people have an idea that the Stewarts are not so anxious to keep people out as to add to their already bulging money bags. It is said they spend sixty thousand dollars in restoring Oak Alley. This may be true, but for people who are parsimonious, it would seem that they expended a certain amount of money needlessly when they covered a beautiful black and white marble floor with a wooden one.

Mr. Ploucher stoppe of Louisiana politics, mentioning in particular one Bob Maistrie, the present Mayor of New Orleans, who has recently been accused by the Federal Government of cashing in a million and a half unreported income for one year on "hot" oil, while he was head of the Conservation Department of Louisiana. Mr. Ploucher says his mother can remember when Maistrie's mother used to drive turkeys through the streets of New Orleans on the way to the public market where one of the Mayor's cousins still operates a booth.

In the evening the madam and I read for a couple of hours before the Franklin stove, primarily from records ofatchitochesarrish. and so eventually to bed.



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February 27th - Tuesday.

Up and abroad before seven this morning in a cloud enshrouded landscape, and so down the "ontrose lane. Little particles of water hung in the air but within half an hour great rents were tearing the clouds away, and a hot sun was breaking through with the assurance that we would enjoy another hot spring day.

I went as far as Floral, and hence about the country side talking here and there with various folks I encountered on the road.

One youth with whom I spoke had been to school with the Madam's daughter. After school days were over, he joined a Civilian Conservation Corps unit, spending three or four years in the service in various sections of Louisiana. He liked the life a lot but said he found those members of this unit who came from the slums of New York and Brooklyn mean fellows. He had gone back into private employment, after turning down a chance to go to Utah with a C.C.C. unit, had worked for some time, but now that wages had fallen to 30 cents an hour, he was going over to Texas to work on a project there which is building a Dam, the work on which would probably last about four years.

I spoke of having read an magazine article on that Dixon fellow from Mississippi who has lived for the past twenty year or so in Paris as a promoter of sports at the Paris Sports Palace. Dixon is now in Natchez and is threatening to restore old Fort Osage which I think he will not do, in spite of Mrs. Moore's historical research for him and her promise to set me in the job as curator of the place,--a thought which always tickles the Madam and me as we contemplate my duties of firing the canon of the Fort every daybreak and sunset.

I lingered too long by the roadside, so that I didn't reach Melrose until twelve thirty when dinner was about done, but the

Madam sat with me and went over the mail while I ate.

In the afternoon I worked at my typewriter, save for half an hour at three when we had coffee together. Miss Annie and her daughter called about then, having come over from Montgomery. He said she hadn't heard from her sister, Miss Nellie who is still in Shreveport.

Upper and afterwards the Adam and I made a little tour of the Gardens and sat for a while at sundown in Lyle's cabin, talking much about Natchez, and it was at that moment that she confessed to me that she had once entertained Mrs. Grafton Miller of the Pilgrimage Garden Club, now at war with the Natchez Garden Club over the spoils in the tours each spring.

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Feb. 27th - Tuesday, - con.

I am sorry Christain and I did accept Mrs. Miller's invitation to luncheon while in Natchez a year back, for it would be interesting to know what that club is like, since we are so well acquainted with the other side. At the time, however, it seemed unfair to get mixed up with the opposing forces since it would have appeared at that time that I was to devote the rest of my life to restoration work under the Garden Club.

We started to read for a bit before the Franklin Stove back in the Adam's room when Frank appeared bearing a card from a Mr. Stenson, of the Historic Building Survey who wants to take measurements of Melrose for the Government. He was accompanied by three or four other youths, and they will spend the night in Natchitoches, returning to Melrose to spend the day tomorrow.

The Adam and I then returned to the Franklin stove, reading further from the Natchitoches records.

I can only express my amazement at the energy the Madam brought to be on this matter many a year ago when she knew of no one who had the slightest interest in Natchitoches Parish even though these inhabitants and their forefathers had lived hereabouts for hundreds of years.

There is a particularly interesting group of papers that have to do with the Comtes and Hertzog families that have owned Magnolia plantation for times that extend back into the 1700's. There is no telling where the originals of these records may be today, for I suppose the Hertzogs put little store on them. I was particularly interested in a transfer effected in 1870 when Mr. Hertzog relinquished his property to his wife, on the austensible grounds that he had purchased these properties with her dowry and that therefore they belonged to her. I should imagine there may be a whole romance connected with this transfer for probably this legal form was put through in order to protect the properties from the carpet baggers who were probably rampant hereabouts at that time.

There are other records, too, having to do with Natchitoches citizens in the 1700's and early 1800's. St. Denis, for example, who founded the town before New Orleans was established, and

Meziere, who came to Natchitoches from the Parish of St. Sulpice in Paris, and who probably was the progenitor of all the mulatto Meziere's that live here on Melrose plantation, there being no more white Meziere's in the Parish. Then there was an account of another early Natchitoches citizen who had been born in Versailles in 1784, at about the time Marie Antoinette was building her little farm. It would be interesting to know what that man went through in France during the Revolution and Napoleonic wars before coming to spend the rest of his life in Natchitoches.

And so to bed early.



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February 28th - ~~Thursday~~ <sup>Wednesday</sup>

Another glorious day, with Frank arriving earlier these days and we me all in favor of it, since everything gets under way that much sooner.

After my first cup of hot coffee, I sauntered out to see what the plantation looked like before sun-up, going through the lot where the men cut wood daily and where the poultry punctuate the night with heard-like "Will, all's well."

Grandpa strolled along behind me, until he reached the wood-pile which is several yards long, and once there, he kept abreast of me by leaping to the top of the first pile of logs and then kept jumping along,--a perfect example of protective coloration,--his gray fur melting into the gray bark of the logs, but his four white feet marking his advance in the dull gray like before dawn.

Before the Madam came over for coffee at ten, Sam Brown came in to see me,--the scoundrel. I couldn't think what he was driving at when he started in by asking me if I remembered those little black pills I used to have on my desk. He said he had found two of them on the floor some time back and that he had fetched them home, knowing they were medicine, and that when he was getting sick, he took them and that they cured him at once because "Des jest natural good medicine".

It then occurred to me that he was referring to a little tin box which I had never been able to find after my last return from a couple of days in Mississippi. He asked me if I could get him some more of that medicine but I told him it was impossible since I never could find the box, and I would need that to see exactly what kind of medicine it was. Automatically he dropped on all fours, suggesting that it might have fallen under the great book case. Curious how instinctively he hit the right spot, for he dragged ~~it~~ it out immediately and presented it to me. There were perhaps a half dozen "pills" left, and I accordingly surmised that Sam had been sampling the medicine right along after he had found the two pills, but I must admit he hadn't taken the box. I looked very wise, regarding the printed material on the box, and said I could get some more, and he was in the Seventh Heaven of delight, saying that that there medicine was plumb good in cure his sickness. And so I gave him the six remaining "pills", and promised to get some more later, but admonished him not to take the medicine except at such times as he should be sure that he was getting sick. He assured me he wouldn't. Of course he didn't know that it was merely a box of licorice candy.

There were some noisy people who called early in the morning,--around eleven, but they eventually left, and shortly afterward three men, including Mr. Peterson of the Historic Buildings Survey came

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to take pictures of the various buildings at Elrose. They seemed particularly interested in the African House, the big house and the mulatto pictures in Lyle's cabin, and in particular the big oil of Pere Augustin, and the little church in the picture which shows the roof coming down on each side to form a roof over the gallery running the entire length of the building on each side. Mr. Peterson thought that an early church in St. Louis had had such an architectural feature.

Dinner was good from conversational point of view, for the subject was old houses and some of their history, old papers covering many of these in the Paris Archives of the Colonial Section, of the Bibliotheque Nationale, I think. Some woman by the name of Miller, I think, on a Carnegie or Rockefeller grant, has done a vast catalogue of these papers. There are ten ~~xxxxxx~~ copies in existence. There were other interesting reference to The American State Papers, in 7 volumes, dealing with deeds, land-

titles, etc., in the Mississippi valley. We must try to borrow these. And then he spoke of a 1740 map of the Natchez region now in the possession of the Newberry Library. The Madam suggested having a photostat made of that.

More visitors came during the afternoon but I didn't see them, keeping myself busy at my machine all afternoon. We eventually got around to the mail which was good from both New York and Louisiana. There was a note asking me to spend Friday evening in New Orleans, with Bobina, both of us calling on the avises and looking over the town a bit on Saturday morning before driving back together to Elrose. The way things shaped up here, however, I fear I had better decline as Aunt Ammie has much to consider these days, and I believe she would be happier if I should be in and about the place. After supper, we sat for a while in the log cabin that houses the bindery. It was that delicious hour between sunset and dark, and I felt that much of her tiredness melted away in the quiet of that sweet little house, lost in the shadows and musical with an unseen chorus of birds in the great trees in the front gardens, all seeming to sing their goodnight songs together.

We read for a little while before the Franklin stove, which now that the weather is too warm to require a fire, seems to have developed into a kind of alter before which we read out history lessons.

We spoke much of her hundreds of scrapbooks, of the strange power that impelled her to collect old papers, photographs and letters, baptism slips, accounts, etc., covering the inhabitants of this distinctive region ~~xxx~~ during the long years when she had the cares of a household on her shoulders, a large family and as much heart-ache as is handed out to all of us,--how in spite of all that,--and besides, in spite of the fact that never before now did she find anyone who had the slightest interest in any of this material. With one one to share the enthusiasm over such a long period of years, it is a wonder she had the urge to save it for the society that will follow.



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February 29th - Thursday.

Another fine spring day, with oceans of daffodills along the borders of the Giant's Beard, and endless rows of narcissus in the orchard where I gathered a few bouquets before breakfast. The purple magnolias too are threatening to burst into blue and the violets are bubbling up from their pools of green in all the strength of their arresting perfume.

I kept going pretty steadily at my machine all morning, save for a half hour's visit from Henry who fussed with my radio for one thing and found it a good excuse for much conversation on his concept of science for another. Now that his eyesight is failing him, he says that he turns more and more from books to radio, which surely is a tremendous blessing, seldom appreciated until a need for something to take the place of eyes is realized.

That brown person who was taken to theatchitoches hospital some week or so back has returned home again. Obviously he will die for sure now. Sam Brown, who is no kin, spoke of having visited him last Saturday in the hospital, saying that the people in the charity ward got little or no attention. This idea coincides with others who probably have known more about that institution than Sam. Sam told me that last Saturday, the brown patient asked for a bar of candy, and one of his visitors was permitted to go out and get it for him. Being terribly ill with pneumonia, he of course couldn't keep the candy on his stomach, and so five minutes after his attempt to manage it, he sent his friend out to get him a small cake to eat. The cake went the same way as the candy. But no one in the hospital seemed to mind. They sent Brown home from the hospital on Monday, and yesterday the Dr. told me that Brown was surely going to die, for his lung was so full of fluid that he had to tap him, and it would appear that nothing could save the man. I can't understand the psychology operating in a hospital that permits a man in that condition to be released from it. But for myself I have never understood hospitals much anyway.

Dinner and the mail which was good, with letters from New York, New Orleans, and New Orleans. Lyle wrote saying that he was bringing up Mr. and Mrs. William Meloney, for over the week-end. Mr. Meloney's mother is Mrs. William Brown Meloney, editor of the Magazine section of the Herald Tribune and numerous other publications. As I recall, it was she who sponsored Madame Curie's visit to the United States when the scientist was presented with a gram of radium.

There was also a nice letter from Miss Louise Butler, asking us to come over to the cottage at St. Francisville, and promising me so precious documents of early ante-bellum days concerning people of the Louisiana-atchez region. The Adam and I read during the evening from Isaac Franklin biography. I folded up a little after eight.

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March 1st - Friday.

Up and abed at a seasonable hour, with breakfast before the sun was above the horizon.

My turkeys started making a racket early and so I had my usual round with them, although the big gobbler keeps so busy strutting and adjusting his great fan like tail that he didn't seem to have time for his usual breakfast of toast and crusts.

I worked all morning on mail, save for a half hour for coffee which Aunt Ammie came to drink with me.

Dinner and a flock of letters from various points but few of little interest.

In the afternoon I tried to straighten up some of my scrap books but didn't get very far before it was time for my afternoon walk and bath.

Upper and just as we finished Dr. and Sister arrived from Alexandria where they had spent the day, and Lyle and Mr. and Mrs. Melhoney arrived from New Orleans. We sat with them during their supper, and afterward, we all went over to Lyle's cabin to spend the evening.

It was good to see Lyle again, note how much better he seems and to enjoy the pleasure of the effervescent humor and kindness he always radiates.

The Melhoney's are successful writers, Rose having written ANOTHER LANGUAGE under the name of Franken at the time of her former marriage to a Dr. Franken in New York. By that husband she had three sons, one of whom enters Harvard this year. Bill has two sons by a former marriage. He seems younger than his second wife. They do serials for Red Book under the name of Franken Melhoney,--I wish I knew how to spell that name, and they contribute individually under other names to magazines. They are en route to Hollywood where they are to discuss a play for Margaret Sullivan.

talk fell to the occult and kindred subjects, and Lyle told of having felt the skinny shoulders of an old ghost one night years ago when he entered his house on Royal Street in New Orleans. Bill spoke of having gone to Palm Springs with Rose before they were married and how at five o'clock in the morning, he had arisen and jumped on a bicycle for hours, stopping at some little road stand, where a woman announced that she had been expecting him for hours, asking him to sit down while she brewed coffee, and recommending a book of poetry to him that lay on the table. On page 67 he was startled to read a title: The Death of William Melhoney. But nothing more happened, and later that day when Rose came back to the house with Bill, the woman seemed indifferent to them and scarcely seemed to remember the episode of the early morning.



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Uncle Mammie retired about 10 o'clock, and I remained for two or three hours longer. We xxx Drank quite a few highballs, and things went along swimmingly until Rose revived from a little nap she had been taking and passed some chocolate covered cherries. As everyone declined, I like a fool took one, and the natural sequence was not long in arriving. I withdrew as unobtrusively as possible, and I don't recall any more.

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March 2nd - Saturday.

I was enchanted to find everything in order this morning when Frank arrived at six thirty with coffee. I even felt noble when I decided that I would do without breakfast and take a walk.

It was a beautiful day and before I knew it I was in town.

I got back to "elrose a little before noon, so that the folks from New Orleans and I got to the table on time, even though our mornings had been somewhat different in extent of territory covered.

I did a flock of letters after dinner, had coffee with Lyle and then went back to my typewriter until about three-thirty when most unexpectedly Robina arrived. I was enchanted, for it has been ever so long since I have seen her and I was surprised, too, because I hadn't expected her down today. Just before she arrived, a whole flock of people went by my maisonnette, but I never did find out who they were,-- some visiting group from some nearby city, I suppose. Robina said she nearly turned around and headed back toward "hreveport when she spotted them just as she pulled in.

About four, we all drove over to Zeline's, - the Melhoney's and Lyle and Aunt Mammie in one car and Robina and I in the other. What the other cabins along Vane River think when they see Zeline entertaining such a multitude, I can only wonder. That's probably about all they can do, too.

We also dropped by Madame "ubert-ocque, and then took a several miles ride before getting home for supper after the rest of the family had finished.

We talked farming a bit, for the Melhoney's have a place at Old Lyme in Connecticut, where they go in for blooded stock exclusively, except for 17 great danes. J. A. dropped in for a few moments, and he talked plantation. I liked what he told "ill about remuneration of plantation workers. As I understand it, they make about xxx three dollars and seventy-five cents a week if they work every day. As J. H. explains it, they only need about two dollars and seventy five cents or three dollars for groceries, meats., etc., leaving "seventy-five cents for them to buy their bottle of wine on Saturday night". When Rose asked about the need of plantation workers and their families for vitamins in a well balance diet which corn meal and pork wouldn't provide, J. A. explained as a matter of course that in view of the strength of the sun's rays in this locality, children and grown up could get their adequate supply from that source. "The best things in life are free", the old song says. I asked Aunt Mammie if she had ever heard of such a theory and she giggled and said she hadn't but it was good to learn since she could put me in the sun henceforth and save me a lot of trouble swallowing food I didn't need.

Bill and Rose retired about nine, and at 11, Lyle came over and staid with me until one.



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March 3rd - Sunday.

Another perfect Spring day--all sunshine and blue sky, with vast pools of white and yellow narcissus and daffodills spilling along the garden paths and swirling on either side of the magnolias that are bursting like great moon-flowers on alternating trees of white and purple

Coffee came at six thirty and as soon as my long beard was off and I had leaped through my shower breakfast appeared on a larger tray than usual.

And with the breakfast, Frank brought me a message from the Madam and Robina, saying that we might take to the big road this afternoon as soon as Lyle and Rose and Bill Meloney left for New Orleans.

About nine Robina came over to read a couple of papers for me and to go over some old plantation maps that the Madam is having enlarged for me. Coffee came at ten and shortly after Tony came to call. He is Frank's eldest son, light in color, slightly erratic by nature and yet withal as sweet in disposition as his father whom I have learned to love so well. Tony is about twenty, but his birthday is a little uncertain, except that it is on the 21st,--but of which month he doesn't know. Henry dropped by, too, with his little boy. Henry is almost white but his little boy of two years is considerably darker, the mother being black as the ace of spades. We talked of plantation doings and particularly of the influenza which both Tony and Henry have had this Spring. I didn't like it much when I learned that that woman from Texas while visiting here had sent the Dr. to give Tony medicine while he was sick, and as a result of that visit, Tony had to pay the Dr. four dollars for a call which he himself had never asked for.

At eleven-thirty, Robina and I went over to the big house to call on the Madam before dinner at 12 o'clock and found Lyle, Rose and Bill there, too. Aunt Cammie had asked them about their return trip to New Orleans with Lyle this afternoon and learned that they intended to start for Hollywood immediately after they had taken Lyle home. Upon hearing this, the Madam pointed out that the New Orleans trip would take about five hundred miles, adding it to a jaunt which was already long enough in their rush to California. She further suggested that if it was merely to take Lyle back to town that it would be better for them to forego that unnecessary trip, particularly as she Robina and I were planning to go down New Orleans way anyway, and that we would of course be delighted to have Lyle go with us.

After much too much talk, it was finally arranged that the Malhoneyes would head directly West from here,--it seems that they have an appointment in Hollywood regarding a play they are to do for Margaret Sullivan, and so telegrams went flying from Melrose to New York, Dallas and Hollywood, and immediately thereafter we gathered around the Sunday dinner table. There was turkey and roast pork, flocks of vegetables, etc., etc., coming to an anti-climax in

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a cake which McKinley, the cook had baked under a road roller, if one were to judge from its crest-fallen appearance.

Coffee followed, and much conversation until 1:30, when we said goodbye to Rose and Bill who headed westward, while the Madam and Lyle and Robina and I lost no time in grabbing a couple of over-night things and scrambling into our car. We stopped at Cloutierville to have coffee with sister and the Dr., and so on southward toward Alexandria and Port Allen. Lyle was never in better form and he and the Madam kept Robina and me in a perpetual state of exhaustion from endless laughter..

We passed through Bunkie with Lyle remarking that so far as he knew it was the only town in the world that was named after a mechanical toy,--the story being that it had something to do with the childish pronunciation of Monkey by the daughter of the town's builder. This is one of the marvelous Louisiana highways,--straight as a string, now hills, of course, and beautifully planted with magnolia and live oak and weeping Myrtle at regular intervals on either side, while on either side stretch miles and miles of cultivated plantations, interspersed here and there by luxuriant moss draped cypresses that delineate the swamp lands.

At six o'clock we reached Port Allen and crossing to Baton Rouge, Lyle telephoned Miss Eva Scott at her plantation home the Shades, some 30 miles up East Feliciana way. Of course she asked us all to come and spend the night with her, and so we dined in Baton Rouge leisurely and then an hour or two after dark started for The Shades. I have always loved the St. Francisville Road since first I traveled it on an evening much like the present one, and so it was doubly pleasant to realize I was on it again, even though the darkness prevented me from seeing much of the countryside,--so familiar to me a couple of years back.

Turning off the main highway, we rambled through Jackson, La., and finally on to Wilson, whence we struck off into a dirt road that was apparently cut through a woods. At the second church of St. Vincent de Paul,--a little wooden negro building, we turned again onto a real plantation road, less traveled than the dirt road, and at this point clearly showing evidences of the traces that are such a familiar feature just a few miles above here in the Woodville-Natchez region. It was pitch dark now, save for the brilliant constellations of stars shining overhead. It was a little chilly, too,--just enough to make us anticipate a roaring fireplace at our journey's end. The gray trunks of the trees seemed to grow closer and closer to the roadway while the surface of the lane itself became more bumpy. Lyle said that we were entering by the back way, and that shortly we would be "plumb up" against the kitchen. There was a torrent of sound at this remark, coming from a turkey gobbler hidden away somewhere in the trees, and at the same time the bark of several dogs, and then a gleam of light. We were at the Shades.



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Miss Eva was there at the foot of the side steps waiting for us, screaming at the dogs to behave, greeting Lyle and Aunt Cammie with true affection and Robina and me with genuine cordiality,--all the time crying at "Marthy", and old black servant, to take out bags and attend to other little chores,--and all this to the accompaniment of vociferous torrents of "X Gobbles" from the gret gobbler hidden away in the trees.

It was so dark I could see nothing of the outside of the house, as I followed along the path and put the brick steps through the hall, but once inside, we found a tremendous fire blazing on the hearth in the living room, with everyone so busy getting stretched and adjusted to the cherry place and so busy talking that no one seemed to pay much attention to the words when all were so delighted to find each other in such hospitable surroundings.

Over all the chatter, however, Miss Eva's voice billowed,--astomishingly penetrating and yet entirely pleasant for a wonder. Lyle asked her about many of her pet dogs and cats, of which she has many including some lovely white ones, and she told of her cows,--I believe she has a couple of hundred in all, and each is named. Some of these are really unusually such as Basket, and an off-spring called Hamper, and another called Candy-toe and Sugar bowl. Miss Eva is possibly 60, a large woman bubbling over with energy and kindness, and I suppose it is this latter quality that has given a quality to her voice that in spite of its penetration is never anything but surprising and almost musical.

To her the plantation descended when Miss Kate, her aunt, died a few years ago, and with Miss Kate's passing, Miss Eva began to expand in personality and enjoyment of arduous labor and the realization of little hobbies which had lain dormant while Miss Kate lived. For example Miss Eva has accumulated some hundred and fifty bells, ranging all the way from a sweet little silver table bell that had once belonged to Robert M. Lee to a large ships bell that was on Admiral Dewey's flagship when he entered Manila Bay. She has had two lovely glass cabinets made to house this collection and will need another one soon since more bells are in the offing. It is interesting to learn that she herself has never asked for a bell or purchased one, but merely has found them in the mail addressed to her after various friends learned that she was interested in them.

By now I was beginning to comprehend the arrangement of the living room, one side of which was dominated by one of the widest and tallest pier mirrors I have ever seen this side of the palace of Versailles. I asked her how she supposed it was ever brought to the Shades,--so far from the Mississippi. She hadn't the vaguest notion, but said it had been here since early times,--which I took to mean sometimes after 1805 when the house was built by a Scott progenator who had come overland from North Carolina. On the opposite side of the room was an enormous bookcase with glass doors, running up about 18 feet, I should guess, and being fully as wide. It had formerly been in Lyle's New Orleans house but he had sent it up here,--having divided it into four parts for the shipment.

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She told us of Alberta McKinsey, the "New Orleans artist who has known Lyle for years, living near him in New Orleans and who has spent many vacations with Aunt Cammie at Melrose. It seems that Alberta came up to The Shades to spend a month with Miss Eva last summer. As everyone knows, Alberta is inclined to be a bit eccentric, and she ran true to form during the vacation. For one thing it rained some of the time and she announced to Miss Eva that she wouldn't be able to sleep in the house, since the rain made it impossible for her to breathe in doors whenever it was humid. It is just a detail that Alberta's little house in New Orleans is tiny and that during the recent cold spell she locked herself in her room until things thawed out.

Well, it seems that Alberta gathered up her paint brushes and palette one day and told Miss Eva she was going down the lane to do some sketches of St. Vincent de Paul. Arriving there it started to drizzle a little, and as Alberta,--a woman of 60 who should know better, was wearing Louis XV heels, she was almost bogged down. She accordingly hailed a passing farm wagon and rode with the farmer to his house not far away until the rain would cease. Now it seems the farmer's wife is always looking out to turn an honest penny and she knew that anyone who would capture a crazy person who might escape from the Jackson, La., Asylum, some miles away would receive five dollars for the trouble. Alberta always looks a bit disheveled to start with, and after her walk from the Shades to St. Vincent de Paul, she hadn't improved in appearance. Added to this is the fact that the farmer's wife is a simple woman, and when someone mentions painting, she naturally thinks of the broadside of a barn or house that may need touching up. It is therefore understandable that she thought she had five dollars practically within her grasp when Alberta twiddled her little paint brushes that she uses for water colors, and announced that she had just come by to paint the church. Alberta lent conviction to the good woman's suspicion by starting to cry because of the rain and her dampened hopes at undertaking the painting that day, and so it wasn't long before the farmer was hailed into a back room and told to get out the car so Alberta could be taken back to the asylum. The farmer's wife then re-appeared and tried to sooth Alberta, telling her that it was better that she put off trying to paint the church with such small pushes while it rained,--the mere saying of which made Alberta weep the more copiously. Finally Alberta got calmed down at just about the time the farmer was ready to start out in his Ford with her toward Jackson, but from something he said, he suddenly guessed that Alberta was actually a guest at the Shades, and so, after confirming this, and much to the disappointment of his wife, the Ford was turned about in the opposite direction and Miss Alberta was chugged over the ruts back to Miss Eva's.

And so the stories went and so the hour approached when Lyle and I thought we should retire. Marthy appeared from nowhere out of the dark, bearing an oil lamp for each of us, and so we said goodnight and mounted the stairs.



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There is something a little eerie and yet enchanting to find one's self mounting the staircase for bed in a house that one hasn't the vaguest notion as to its external appearance. I felt it particularly at The Shades which is so sturdy and almost austere in its construction and appointments. After all, the substantial houses of Louisiana were frequently built by the Empire builders like the original Mr. Scott who built The Shades so solidly, but the houses that offer amenities and grace came at a later and more opulent era. I thought of what someone had once said about the Felicianas,--"West Feliciana is Athens and East Feliciana is Sparta. The Shades is in East Feliciana.

On the second floor there are two enormous bed rooms,--one on either side of the wide hall that runs through the center of the upper story. Lyle said he was enchanted to sleep up here since he, as a youth, on visits here had never been permitted about the first floor, since the second story was the ladies' retiring rooms. He also said he had always been dying to get into the attic but had never yet made it. Well, this was the opportunity, and so, we climbed up as silently as we could, bearing a flash light with us. Once at the top of the stairs, we were disappointed to hear "obina's" voice calling from down on the first floor. We both scrambled down from the attic as fast as we could, and breathlessly I responded. She merely wanted to ask me for the Alka-Seltzer which Aunt Cammie had put in her pocketbook, so we escaped that time.

Both Lyle's huge bedroom and mine were excessively bare, save for a washstand, a crummy old dresser and a huge four poster bed,--imposing and doubly elegant in this Spartan setting. I found it extraordinary that during all the ante-bellum years when the shades, like all the other great plantations were rooling up fortunes year after year, that no pictures, rugs, lovely chairs or other precious bric-a-brac ever graced this section of the Scott's mansion. It would appear that the original Scott was unconcerned about such details, and it seems that each succeeding generation must have prided itself upon this point which they must have misconstrued as a virtue.

We undressed and I was about to plunge into the featherbed of my great four poster when Lyle shuffled over in his bedroom slippers, saying that he had some whiskey and that it would be nice if I would join him in a drink before folding up my beard. I gladly accepted, welcoming the good cheer and the opportunity to learn more of this unusual house and its people. Back in Lyle's room we rummaged around for glasses, going through the large armoire that was lost away in the far corner. There wasn't a glass in sight but Lyle did run across something that set us both into gales of laughter, for there on the shelf of the armoire lay,--of all things,--a black jack, handsomely contrived and capable of crushing a man's brain with one gentle stroke. Beside the black jack lay a card reading: Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We fell back onto the billowing featherbed, roaring with muffled mirth, wondering the while how such a strange instrument ever found its way to the Scotts.

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Finally we got back some measure of self control, and Lyle called down the great hall stair to Miss Eva whose voice was still audible, although somewhat muffled as it was behind heavy closed doors on the floor below. In a moment, old Marthy, who apparently sleeps somewhere in the house appeared with two glasses, and Lyle and I had our belated nightcap. As we sat there he told me something of the appearance of the house from the houseide and something, too, of the kindly, et austere people who had lived it there many years. One amusing episode which he told particularly well had to do with the ivy which used to cover the place. It seems that one moonlit night one of the old maids who slept in the room we were in awoke and to her consternation beheld a snake curled up on the broad windowsill of the room. She yelled bloody-murder: "It's a serpent, it's a serpent. Ther's a sarpenh in my room?" until the whole place was in turmoil and the snake had been shoood out. The next day all the ivy that draped the old mansion was cut down and has never been allowed to ramble there since.

Miss Eva's aunt, Miss Kate, while she lived, would never permit any carpets or rugs on the floors. She explained it this way once to Aunt Cammie: "Dogs and carpets don't mix well. For myself, I prefer dogs",--and that's all there was to it,--about forty dogs, as Lyle remembered.

But it eventually grew late, and eventually we said good night and I went over to my big bed in the distant end of the house, and so to sleep, lulled in part by the sound of Miss Eva's voice which still rolled through the old mansion as she responded to unheard questions from Aunt Cammie, I suppose, in the living room down below.



March 4th - Monday.

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Day begins early on The Shades Plantation. After all, there are three thousand five hundred acres, the price of cotton is down, and the care of much stock requires time. It is Miss Eva's job and she is equal to it.

At three thirty I heard her. She goes out on the gallery and summons up the negroes from their quarters and cabins away off toward the woods in the back of the place. It seems curious that a woman with such a varied collection of bells and such an efficient staff of servants should employ the ~~same~~ vocal chords for such a reveille. But Miss Eva's larynx is utterly adequate.

The sensation of that long penetrating call was extraordinary. It is no way resemble anything so much as the vast tonal qualities of a giant organ, surging over the gardens to disturbed the poultry and feathered creatures, echoing through the kennels and arousing the deepest of sleepers in the cabins beyond. And yet as a guest in the house it merely awoke me from slumber in such a way as to lull me back whence I had come. But it didn't lull the negroes nor even Miss Eva, for shortly thereafter she was in full command at the cattle barns, directing this one and that one as to how much corn and how much oats should be measured out for this cow or that mule, and with a precision and cheeriness that tickled the colored folks and seemed to make them glad that they were assisting at this time worn custom that Miss Eva had instituted several years back when the management of the plantation and the welfare of many a colored family fell to her.

Like the rest of the household, I suppose, I drifted back into slumber, awakening three hours later to the liquid notes of a mocking bird that silled out an unending roll of song in counterpoint to the many lesser birds that were making the garden vibrant with their sun-rise serenade. A little time passed and the black face of a house servant appeared. It was Percy Bell, who has served morning to Miss Eva's guests for many a year. He poured out the black brew into a Dresden demi-tasse, and holding it on the shining silver tray, responded to many a question I asked about his life at The Shades, while I drank my eye-opener.

A few minutes later I was up and dressed and down stairs, where I found Miss Eva and Aunt Cammie about to take a little tour of the gardens before breakfast. We stepped out on the front gallery and there I got my first glimpse of The Shades. We went directly down the front steps and the walk bordered by huge box hedges that had been there a hundred years. The land gently slopes away from the house, down toward an artificial pond a little to the left and on to the plantation road farther away. Japonica trees were in full bloom, red and variegated, with row upon row of narcissus, jonquills, and beautiful little sweet white flowers which Miss Eva termed "jingle bells", but I doubt if this is the botanical title.

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I turned and looked back to see the house where I had spent the night. It was a sturdy old mansion, red brick that was mellow yet vital in its coloring. Across the entire front ran a low gallery, one story high, with small columns supporting the roof. The second story had the appearance of being higher than the first, and above that rose the attic. Wandering a little further along the circular path that lead off toward the rose garden, I could see that a huge "el" ran straight back from the middle of the pile, so that the house formed a gigantic "T". There was a small addition added to this way of a bath room which Miss Eva had instituted after Miss Kate had died. By way of window, in this addition, she introduced a fan light, siding half of a wagon wheel for a frame and the spokes to carry out the impression of the fan. Robina joined us on our tour and Lyle appeared shortly after. We were all busy remarking upon the beauty of the gardens, the age-old brick walks, the unusual size of the sweet olive trees and "aponic" and the wisteria, while Miss Eva thundered out directions to unseen negroes who suddenly came scurrying with spades to dig up great batches of plants and bulbs which Miss Eva was having packed to be sent to Melrose.

In the midst of all this activity, old Marthy appeared on the gallery to ring the breakfast bell. We needed but one summons as the spirit of The Shades and Miss Eva had given us a tremendous appetite.

And so we followed her into the great dining room which is in the "T" section of the house. I guess the room is about 40 feet long and possibly 15 feet wide. The windows form one side of the room and are draped with turkey red drapes,--an innovation of Miss Eva, I understand. At the one end of the room by the entrance door is a large fireplace while at the other is an enormous buffet, flanked by built-in china closets. The ceiling is of mahogany beams.

We breakfasted heartily, fired chicken and grits with chicken gravy, hot biscuits, home made sausages, griddle cakes and syrup, with good black Louisiana coffee, of course. Everything was in abundance,--scrambled eggs more plantation sausage and more hot biscuit with conversation going along at full speed, with Miss Eva pleasantly entertaining us with stories of her colored people and their little problems and pleasures. Some one had sent Miss Eva a whole stack of old silk stockings just before the big freeze. I presume they were for rug making or something of the sort. These she doled out to the colored folks, making them put on four pairs at a time to be sure they kept warm. There was a recent wedding of a popular young colored couple on the place not long back. Some of her people described the celebration to her, saying that after the ceremony they served cake and wine. Miss Eva remarked they were so fashionable in their doings that they should have gone better by one step and served cocktails. The colored man thought hard before replying and they declared that there weren't enough roosters on the place to do that.



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After another round of coffee and a cigarette, we realized that we must be getting on our way but before we left, Lyle wanted me to see the kitchen. It is just to the rear of the long dinning room, down a half dozen steps which the two servants had been running up and down as they served during breakfast. To my surprise, I found the amply proportioned room busy with servants,-- about six or eight, I should judge, and all busy. At the f r end of the kitchen Miss Eva pointed out the fire place. It is the larges I have ever seen, and all fitted out with ~~xxx~~ cranes and gages for the preparation of an variety of food. It is so enormous that the andirons are plough-shares. Everything about this house seemed to be so substantial and well buttressed, whether it was the building that impressed itself upon Miss Eva or Miss Eva upon it. And the servants jumped when Miss Eva gave orders but not through timidity but because it seemed to please them to keep even in physical activity with the unquestioned agility and power of her voice and personality.

And so Miss Eva accompanied us on our little visit to Hickory Hill Plantation, two miles from the Shades. On the lane, she pointed out several cabins where her darkies lived, and spoke of their eccentricities and of one darkie who occupied a cabin much larger than he needed and how she got him to give it up only by promising him she would build him a new cabin along any plan he desired. He demanded that it be 10 feet wide, long and high and that it have no windows in it. Miss Eva acquiesced on all points save that of the window which she insisted on building in but permitted him to board it up, which he promptly did. As years went by, she said, the darkies mind gave way a little and so she eventually persuaded him to go to the insane Asylum in nearby Jackson. He was loath to leave the plantation but finally consented amidst tears of both Miss Eva and the darkie.

Shortly we drove up a small grade at the end of which stood Hickory Hill,--a red brick mansion with white columns, the center two being round and the two end ones square. The ends of the gallery were built in with brick wall and each end of this gallery had windows and blinds which could be thrown open, with the front of the gallery being open as all gallerys are. It is unfortunate that the ornamental vases at each corner of the roof above the squar pillars has been blown down by a storm. Fortunately one is still preserved, and Lyle offered to have both reproduced if the Freeman's would send it to New Orleans.

Mr Freeman, his daughter and her son, a youth of some thirty summers, received us. They were kindly and cordial. They pointed out some of the magnificent japonicas in full bloom and the large sweet olive trees that reminded one of the freezing January. They asked us in. The room was distinguished chiefly by its fine marble mantle piece. The room was over charged by uninteresting furniture and pictures. He shatted briefly, issued invitations to call at Melrose, and departed. Hickory Hill was built about 1815, a substantial house but somehow barren within. Perhaps it lacked personality.

Perhaps it lacked personality.

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Leaving Hickory Hill, we drove Miss Eva back to The Shades, said good bye and started off down the front plantation road,-- opposite from the entrance we had made last night. Perhaps a quarter of a mile from the house, we could distinctly hear Miss Eva booming out orders to her darkies. She had said something about having to get the ploughs going, and it would seem that through her own larynx she must have been broadcasting for the laborers would could doubtlessly hear her, no matter on which of the 3,5000 acres they might find themselves at that moment. I glanced back at the somewhat gaunt redbrick mansion, a monument to stolidity and a bulwak against any storm whether it might be economic or equinoxial. And for the life of my I couldn't figure out if it was the house that had impressed its character on Miss Eva or if it could be Miss Eva who had given so many red corusles to it, or if, by strange coincidence both the mansion and the woman had been made of the same basic quality.

It was a pleasant road that we followed eastward, rolling up and down little hillocks and around half traces that made me think of the Atchez region just above us a few miles to the North. The sun was brilliant and the flowers and luxuriant bushes and trees seemed vibrant with new life as they stretched out their branches to touch the car from time to time. We passed the Scott buireal ground on the right. It seemed to me as large as many a "ew England hamlet's instead of a placed reserved for just one family, but then, of course, the Scotts have been living at the Shades for well over a century and a quarter. We passed over little streamlets and rustic bridges, passed the Thompson place,-- a huge mansion, freshly painted, yet still depressing because of its lamenatble architecture, and so on across the railroad track, and through a road bordered on either side by endless fields that didn't seem to be cultivated. I suppose these were the fat acres on which cotton had once flourished to make its owners rich.

Finally we reached Carr's Creek, and turning sharply to the right we entered the estate known as Asphodel. The house sets perhaps a quarter of a mile back from the main road, and is approached by a circular drive passing directly in front of the house, but cutting off the sight of the house which is built on up and beyond the old brick retaining wall. Finally the car turned back toward the left, and there before us stood lovely Asphodel, slightly down at the heel, but gloriously refined in its quiet classical central structure with its retiring wings of either side, each embellished by a little gallery supported by lovely quiet doric columns.

The house is almost a chalk white, and as we stepped into the front door, I noticed the same white dominating the walls of the interior. Finally Miss Anne, who had been washing on the back gallery, came in drying her hands on her apron.



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Asphodel is a refined house and Miss Anne is a lady. I suppose she may be in her 70's. Her voice is cultivated and low. Her hair is white like the walls of Asphodel and there is a certain chalkiness about her coloring that is a part of Asphodel, too. It was a confirmation of all this impression just to touch her hand which was somehow soft and refined, even though it must have often been jeopardized during these past years by much hard labor.

She asked us into the charming room in the wing at the extreme left. It is interesting that this room cannot be entered from the large drawing room in the main section of the house except by stepping outside the house. In a few minutes she was back with an armful of wood to start a fire and with the promise that Miss Kate would appear shortly. Miss Kate did, walking with difficulty as her ankles are badly swollen.

I had remembered from Lyle's Old Louisiana that story about the Smith girls not leaving Asphodel for more than 25 years, and that was written 11 years ago. In it he had told of some friends who wanted to entertain Miss Sarah and Miss Kate by bringing some movies for them to see. They had acquiesced with certain misgiving and so the projection machine had been attached to the automobile and the pictures had been thrown on the white wall of the twin drawing rooms that run across the front of the house. At the conclusion of the showing Miss Sarah had remarked that it was a very "interesting experience", which was followed by "But one which I should not care to repeat" on the part of Miss Kate. And Robina had remarked that since both the Smith girls wore artificial teeth, she wondered if they could have purchased them from a mail order house, since neither of them had left the place for so long a time.

Asphodel had been built in 1835 and had passed to the Flucker family the year it was completed. It had enjoyed the vast opulence and amenities of its neighboring plantations prior to the war. Miss Kate said that when the Yankees descended upon Asphodel, the first thing they did was to raid the watermelon patch. A Confederate shot at the raiders, killing a Yankee officer, who died on the steps of the lovely mansion. He was buried just outside the family graveyard and members of his family have come each year ever since to decorate his grave.

While Lyle and Aunt Cammie were talking with Miss Sarah,--to whom I erroneously referred to above as Miss Anne, Robina and I wandered about the old mansion. For the most part we found the rooms rather indifferently furnished, although some of the pieces were interesting if not especially to my fancy. In the one drawing-room, however, there were too many potted plants on the floor, and in most of the rooms there were too many uninteresting pictures nailed upon the wall. It made me a little heart-sick to notice how much plaster had fallen from the ceilings and that an ugly crack appeared in one or two places near the cornices. A gallery ran across the length of the house of the rear, and unlike the three separate galleries on the front, this gallery communicated with the wings as well as the individual rooms in the main section of the

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As I wandered about from room to room while Mesdames Smith, Lyle and Aunt Cammie were chatting in the left wing, I found a staircase running up to the second floor. Robina consented to stand guard while I mounted the steps. It took me only a minute to reach the upper hall which divided the upper floor into two sections. One of the doors was tied shut by an old string which was secured around the door knob. On the end of the string was tied a silver spoon that was stuck into a crack in the wainscoting to act as a lock. I couldn't resist the temptation to peak into the room, and so I drew out the spoon and gently pushed the door open. There in vast array was probably as fine a collection of fine antiques as one would be likely to find in an old Louisiana mansion. I noticed in particular as handsomely carved old fourt poster bed, its teester's upholstery sagging alarmingly. There were some charming little tables, chairs, shaving stands and heaven alone knows what all,--all piled helter skelter about the room which was almost to overflowing. I hastily called Robina to take a peak at all these lovely treasures. We were both puzzled why they should all be hidden away up here but we didn't have time to linger, as there was a chance that Miss Sarah might leave her guests for a moment, and we didn't want to be caught.

And so we flew back down stairs, inspected the big drawing rooms again, and marvelled at the beauty of the crumbling plaster work and the simply dignity of the woodcarings about the mantle doorways and windows.

A few minutes later we joined the rest in the east room where we found them discussing literature with which, somewhat strangely the Misses Smith keep more or less abreast. They offered us cake and wine but we declined, feeling that we should be moving along. Besides, Miss Sarah's wash tub was waiting for her and Lyle had pressing duties in New Orleans that evening and we still had many places to visit. And so we said goodbye to Miss Sarah and Miss Kate. They asked us to come back, and there is a chance that we may some day, although as we left Aunt Cammie remarked that this was probably the last time anybody would be able to visit the Misses Smith. But still in their quiet way, I suppose they may live for a little while longer, for in a way they are happy, living as they do far from the world and quite alone save for the occasional visitor and their two fat dogs, for whom they make birthday cakes on occasion, but Miss Sarah always being careful to put currents in only one side of the cake, since she and Miss Kate are fond of currents but the dogs don't seem to mind whether they have them in their birthday cake or not.

And so it was goodbye to the lovely ladies of Asphodel, and as I drove away I wondered at their sweetness and refinement, and the whiteness of their hair and their skin and the chalkiness of the coloring in the outer and inner walls of the house, and how much it needed repairs and some good strong solid colors, taffeta g draperies and velvet carpets of blue, and potted plants and cheap pictures thrown out and lovely old antiques brought down stairs, and withal much plaster work restored and many a touch of paint both within and without. And



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as I drove away from Asphodel, I couldn't help but wonder again at the relations ip between the house and its occupants.--the red corpusles vibrating back at the Scott mansions and the exceeding anemia pervading at the Smiths. For me I couldnt do much for The Shades for it is to gaunt and study that it will probably always take care of itself and I don't care especially, but somehow there is something so gentle and so lovely about Asphodel that calls for sympathy and nurture, how enchanted I would be to take it under my wing.--if I only had one.

And so back to the St. Francisville Road and by the Standard Oil tanks,--a wholeflock of them, each of which, according to Robins, holds 50,000 barrels as storage, and so into Baton Rouge. Ordinarily it would have been time for dinner, but we had dined so well with Miss Eva that food was out of the question. But we did stop for gas, and Aunt Cammie took that occasion to wander through a graveyard that stood opposite the station. It was an old negro one, according to Lyle, and includes the grave of a widely know negress of Baton Rouge who for years successfully conducted the much talked of Mahogany "all which was just what you suspected it to be.

We continued down the air line for a way, and then over to the river road, skipping along at a pretty good clip, the levee on the right, and many a famous old plantation house on the left, including Burnside, recently sold for 8,500 dollars, Colombe and seve al others whose names I have forgotten. At last we reached Uncle Sam, the river's most famous plantation. Mrs. Guillot, the wife of the overseer, had written Aunt Cammie that already the wrecking concern of Baton Rouge had begun battering the place to pieces, and it was this excuse that we empl yed to start our journey in the first place.

It's a pity that the river has so encroached upon Uncle Sam that a levee must be constructed so that the river itself will sweep over the emplacement of this famous collection of plantations within a few weeks. Already the roof of the big house had lost one of its little do mers has the crow-bars and pick-axes flew. The big house is a hundred feet square, surrounded on all four sides by a colonade of 28 great Doric pillars that run up two stories forming a double gallery all around the house. There are six accompanying out buildings, judiciously placed to right and left of the main house which somehow suggests the Sun and six of its major planets. The first two buildings to the right and left of the big house are one story high, with a gallery in front and back ornamented with six Doric columns like the lesser off spring of the parent unit. to the right and left of each of these are two slightly smaller little Greek temples, with their Doric columns front and back. To the rear are two delicious six sided dove cotes of brick. The roofs

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are pointed. To the left is a splendid charriage house of red brick and beautiful arches, and in color pleasantly contrasting with the other seven units which are of cream yellow. To the right of this group is an immense hospital, which is already pretty well demolished. Far to the rear, and almost out of sight, is a street of forty cabins which were the slave quarters and beyond these was the plantation sugar refinary. Uncle Sam was completed in 1835, and at that time there was a long avenue of great live-oaks that stretched several hundred years from the house down to the Mississippi. The river has subsequently nibbled these giants away, two by tow, until there is but one left, and that will topple into the stream within a few weeks.

Lyle took seve al snapshots of the place, which, I understand, was never included in the Historic Buildings Survey,--a fact which seems almost incredible since Uncle Sam is one of the most famous landmarks on the Mississippi. I talked with Mrs. Guillot for a few minutes. She told me that everyone in St. Jacques --or St. James Parish spoke French, and always had been French. I don't know any thing about the Samuel Lagon's who built the place, although tradition says he was short and swarthy,--and obviously he knew how to coin money out of sugar cane. His two daughters married the brothers, Alus, and one daughter was the only offspring of these unions. She married one Jules Jacobs, and from the Jacobs family it passed into the control of corporations. The big house hasn't been occupied since 1915, but during the ensuing 25 years between that date and the present, overseers have lived in one of the garconneres.

I also recognize a colored boy whom I had seen one evening a couple of years ago when Christian and I passed by. He had talked with us for a little while about the old house and about the mystery of the lucusts and how they sag in August but could go down in the ground and sleep all winter. He said he didn't understand it but probably God alone did. I thought he was a nice boy and pretty smart, too.

Lyle had to catch a bus from Litcher for New Orleans at 1:30, and so Robina and I drove him over to the air line some 15 miles away. On our return to Uncle Sam, we picked up Aunt Cammie and several little items from Uncle Sam which Mrs. Guillot had sequestered for us, including some lovely iron brackets, an fine old press and a tracing of the famous little weather vane,--horse and buggy, which Aunt Cammie can have reproduced in copper.

From Uncle Sam we drove down to Convent and further along until we reached Jefferson College. We were hoping we might be able to consult the Day Book for 1852 when Aunt Cammie's uncle Lafayette Erwin was a student there, but a nice boy told us that the Jesuites had just bought Jefferson College and all the books of the former institution were now in Washington. This lovely old place, with its endless colonnades and great avenues of moss draped oaks is perhaps one of the loveliest ante-bellum structures left along the Mississippi.



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From Jefferson College we drove north as far as the Ferry which would take us across to Donaldsonville. I was anxious to see this old town which had once been the capitol of Louisiana in 1833, but we didn't linger long as we wanted to get to Thibodeaux before nightfall. And so we drove along the concrete that runs parallel to Bayou Lafourche for miles on end, passing many of the houses where Aunt Cammie had visited and lived as a child,--St. Emma, Poverty Point, Ridgefield and others. We also passed the old home of Chief Justice White of the Supreme Court, but were disappointed in the new fence some "arty" person had put up, seemingly to make a small house seem smaller. The old oaks which were green in Aunt Cammie's memory as having draped the lawns in years gone by were now all gone. It was a different Bayou, too, from the one she had known, for as a girl she had ridden on great steamers up and down this famous water way, which now is a mere ditch, about ~~xx~~ as wide as a city street.

We stopped for a few moments in Napoleonville, but finding accommodations unsatisfactory, we ran on 20 miles further to Thibodeaux where we had a leisurely dinner and went to sleep, all of us a little weary, and particularly poor Robina, I fear, who must have been pretty well exhausted after such an arduous drive.

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March 5th - Tuesday.

Up about seven and joined Aunt Cammie and Robina for breakfast at the Green Parrot.

Afterwards we drove to the Episcopal Church. It is as lovely a Georgian building as I have seen and reminds me so much of the church Christian and I like so much in Old Lyme, Conn., on that elm line street not far from The Boxwood. Unfortunately the hour was too early for the church to be open, and so we contented ourselves by inspecting the outside and by visiting the beautiful churchyard adjoining where Aunt Cammie's mother and father are buried near the Nichols plot. Aunt Cammie also pointed out the monument to those who perished in the ~~xxxx~~ disaster at East Isle, and spoke of the wonderful account of that extraordinary event as chronicled by Cecilio Earn.

We dropped back by the hotel to pick up Robina's shoes which she had left under her bed, and then crossed the Bayou, passing the old plantation house just opposite the bridge which is now a K. of C. club house. From there we drove along the Bayou toward the West for a mile or so to stop for a moment or two at Menzi, and fine old ante-bellum home with an unusual double staircase rising in semi-circle from the ground up to the front door on the elevated gallery. Aunt Cammie had known the people who had once lived there. They were very ~~wealthy~~ wealthy, she said, and inordinately kind. When disaster overtook them economically, however, they lost everything and the mistress of this lovely old place eventually cleaned floors in New Orleans. The house is now beautifully maintained, and the present mistress has had correspondence with Aunt Cammie but in view of the earliness of the hour we didn't go in.

We turned back toward Thibodeaux at this point, Aunt Cammie telling of the insurrection of darkies that failed to hatch some time after the War. Slowly the supply of the towns coal oil was bought up by negroes and sugar knives also began finding their way into their hands. The plot was for the colored men to kill all the white men while the colored women were to finish off all the women and children who were white, and while this was being undertaken the town was to be burned to the ground. Fortunately the plot was discovered a short time before it was set for fruition, several ringleaders were marched outside the town, and the attempt was accordingly frustrated.

Passing through town, we headed back eastward down the road toward Napoleonville. Just outside the Thibodeaux limits, we stopped at the ruins of Ridgefield, the old home of former Governor Nichols. The house burned in January of this year, - 1940. Aunt Cammie had had a line from Josie Nichols, the Governor's daughter a short time back, but since the fire. We didn't call on her in town, however, as our programme for the day was already top-heavy. The fabulous old moss draped oaks drooped mournfully about the charred walls and chimneys, and a few little relics of the old house rested pitifully in the blackened embers. Aunt



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Aunt Cammie found some spindles from the gallery bannister which she brought to the car with her, and I salvaged a badly blackened iron coal bucket. Curiously there was still a quantity of unburned coal still in this container, which was about two feet high, perhaps 10 inches square, with an iron cover and a metal container the same shape but slightly smaller that fitted snugly into the outer frame. I think I can have it rubbed with steel wool and given a coat of white Duco and thus have a practical magazine holder which I shall like much,--especially for its association.

A little below the Nichols Place, we crossed the Bayou again to the south side, and after passing one or two deserted plantation emplacements, we came to Woodlawn, the beautiful old classic home the the "ughs. Fortunately this house was one of the early objects of a survey by the Historic American Buildings Survey, so that its complete record will be preserved intact in the plans brought out under the Government's sponsorship. The old oaks and lovely gardens that formerly stood in front of the house are gone, not even the great rose bush is left which Aunt Cammie could remember as having entwined itself along the bannister of the second story gallery which used to run across the front of the house. The flooring in this upper gallery is now gone. Flanking the elongated classic central unit, little classic pavilions balance each other at right and left. Hay was store in these a few years back and this has mildewed, so that the floors have now fallen, the marble mantle pieces have been ripped out and probably nothing can save these little architectural jewels from impending disintegration.

We went into the big house, noting the scars left by time and marauders. The bannister and rail that formerly ran to the attic from the first floor has disappeared. On the second floor, I saw the great drawing rooms, some of them beautifully decorated with exquisite plaster motifs from the Green and lovely central ceiling medallions from which once hung crystal chandeliers. And here I saw the arrangement of the four great rooms and the central hall, and how it was that Aunt Cammie as a little girl while visiting the "ughs with her mother, used to draw herself back against the wall as Miss Robinson, that slightly demented relative of the "ughs, would fly at break neck speed in her wheel chair, round and round the house, disappearing through one doorway, only to come storming through another, as "yle would say: "Like a bat out of Hell", with all the older "ughs paying her not the slightest heed, maintaining their conversation in the usual well modulated tone, and apparently never noticing Miss Robinson, in spite of little Carmelites obvious terror at the chance of being run down.

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It was with sad hearts that we said goodbye to Woodlawn, realizing as we did that probably we would never see it again, since it can't last long at the present rate of decay. The gallery at the back of the house has already disappeared, as have one of the projecting wings at the back. The windows are out all over the building, and the weather is making inroads where lack of repair has opened the edifice to rain. This is the end of Woodlawn.

And so we continued down the road, and perhaps a mile further along came to the other "ugh mansion which a brother, I believe, had built. It was called "adewood, and is rather more tremendous than Woodlawn but not so interesting from an architectural viewpoint. Its enormous portico is impressive, and elsewhere this house would probably be a more satisfying, but its proximity to Woodlawn, which is so much more lovely, makes "adewood suffer by the comparison.

We stopped in the big road for a moment. Aunt Cammie recognized Mrs. Baker, who owns "adewood, on the drive in front of the house. "obina and "yle and Aunt Cammie had called on her a year or two back and weren't especially pleased. Robina and I both roar a second or two later when Aunt Cammie said that the Bakers had certainly saved "adewood from the same fate that awaited Woodlawn, but during the past year one of the Bakers, either "r. or Mrs. had died. In view of the individual we saw on the drive, both "obina and I told Aunt Cammie that we hoped that in reality it was "r. Baker rather than "rs. how had passed on.

We had intended to stay on the same side of the Bayou until reaching Belle Alliance, a plantation Aunt Cammie had known in childhood, but someone told us that it was practically gone, and so we crossed over to "apoleonville, had coffee and then headed north toward Whitecastle.

We left the concrete road there for the River road, hesitating for a moment before Nottaway, the 40 room house that the "andolphs of Virginia had built in 1859. And from there we drove south for a mile to Bellegrove, or as it is popularly referred to about here,--the "ink House. At this late date it is pretty well to pieces, although with lots of money, I reckon it still might be saved. The great "orinthian columns and its splendid foundations are still intact, although all its windows are gone, all its iron work and mantles ripped out and half the floors torn up. Originally Bellegrove had 75 rooms but one wing was blow away a few years ago, so now I suppose there aren't more than fifty. What I liked about the rooms was the nice proportion, for all were ample and yet none were too vast. I suppose when old "ndrews built it in 1859, Bellegrove was the final example of ante-bellum magnificence. The Stone Ware's who occupied it for years after the war, kept it up beautifully, but now it hasn't been occupied for years, and certainly looks done for.



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We lunched at Whitecastle, and then headed north toward Plaquemine, passing along the same flat plantation fields that we had know ever since we left sphodel yesterday morning. Great islands of oak trees half a mile or so on either side of the road indicated old plantation houses, some of which we could see and some we couldn't make out, they were so far away. Eventually we came to the broad acres of the Gay family, of which this particular branch owns three plantations hereabouts at present,--Saint Louis, Tennessee and another whose name I forget. As Aunt Ammie had always thought of looking for her grandfather's grave on St. Louis plantation, we stopped to ask a man sitting in a car parked by the roadside if he had ever heard of the old burial ground on the place. He had, and turning slightly in the car, pointed down the concrete road a piece where we found the tombs of Joseph Erwin within half a dozen feet of the new highway. Formerly, of course, there had been only the river road which passed in front of St. Louis plantation house half a mile away. Here Joseph Erwin had been buried in 1828, after an enormously successful career during which he had accumulated thirty thousand acres and become one of the three richest men in Louisiana.

We had thought of stopping or rather detouring for a bit after leaving Plaquemine to run out to Madey Cove, which Aunt Ammie's grandfather had built on Bayou Gros Repe, but the day was beginning to wane, and so we slid right along into Alexandria where we got a bite, and so kept going until we reach the river and home about seven in the evening.

For a while we sat before Aunt Ammie's Franklin stove, reading of the places we had been in Lyle's Old Louisiana, and looking through scrap books on the same subjects. About ten we had a little supper in the dinning room and shortly thereafter said goodnight.

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March 6th - Wednesday.

It's good to be home again, particularly to awaken in the morning to find Frank standing by my bed with his tray of good Louisiana coffee.

Robina had told him that I would ride part way with her this morning on her return to Shreveport, and I was glad to have breakfast a little earlier than usual, as we wanted to leave around seven o'clock.

It continues glorious weather, and as we rode along, it seemed as though every mule in the parish must have been hitched to a plough and the smell of newly turned earth was sweet on the air, mixed as it was with the scent of coffee which Robina was carrying in the back of the car as a gift to someone in Shreveport as a gift from Aunt Ammie.

We talked of many things, particularly regarding our next trip to Atchez which I am hoping may be successfully arranged for about April 10th, when Robina wants to look over Ally Johnson's clocks with a view of purchasing one from that kindly, reticent mulatto widow of the multao Mr. Johnson. I am hoping Robina may also get the bound Atchez and New Orleans newspapers of the 1830's which Aunt Ammie has been trying to buy from her.

We also talked of our trip and I again referred to the unusual story which Robina had told us on Monday when we were crossing the Mississippi River at Connelsonville. I want to include the story in this Journal. It goes something like this:

A few years ago two families were living in Shreveport named Smithers and Mayse. The Smithers had struck oil and were ably provided for in worldly good. The Mayse were moderately successful. The Smithers had a son, Scott, who was in school in the grades with a daughter of the Mayse, named Mary. The children were good friends.

But business called the Mayse family to live in Montgomery, La., and so Scott and Mary never did see each other during their high school years, and as the families had never been more than acquaintances in Shreveport, they lost sight of each other.

A year ago, Mary went away to ~~xxxxx~~ college at Memphis. In chatting one day with some of her chums, one of the girls mentioned why she liked certain boys, and spoke very complimentary of Scott Smithers's dancing. Mary had almost forgotten her little friend of grammar school, but the name brought back that early association, and she made inquiry regarding the boy. The girl told her that Scott was a student at the University in Lexington, Kentucky. Mary was glad to hear of Scott again and she forthwith dropped him a little note referring to their



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to their acquaintance in Chreveport when they were small children, sending the letter to him at the University.

A couple of days later Mary was enchanted to receive a note from Scott, thanking her for her note, telling her of his activities in the University and asking her if any of the girls at her college in Memphis were planning to attend the mid-term party which it has long been the custom for the youths in the Lexington University to give for their young ladies.

Mary replied affirmatively, mentioned how nice she thought this old custom was, and thanked Scott for his early response to her note.

A brisk correspondence ensued, and Scott wrote her when she went home for a week-end, asking if she would accept his invitation to be his guest at the forth coming University entertainment in Lexington, and further inquiring if she might like him to write directly to her parents regarding her acceptance. Mary's mother saw the note, and thought it was nice of Scott to be so courteous to her daughter and to her parents, but rather inclined toward discouraging Mary from acceptance. Mary's father, on the other hand, who was usually inclined toward strictness, surprised both mother and daughter, by expressing the view that it would be nice for Mary to attend the week-end round of festivities.

Mary accordingly accepted Scott's invitation, and in accordance with the prevailing custom of his University, she forwarded her measurements so that a suitable costume might be made for her at the bal-masque.

When the time arrived for the young women to start, there were plenty of enthusiastic hearts on the train, but none probably more full of anticipation than Mary. In the first place there was the question as to whether she would remember Scott, it had been so long since she had seen him, and she herself had changed so greatly that she assumed that he would be lots different too. He hoped, however, that he would still be as attractive as she remembered him from grammar school.

When the train pulled in to the Lexington station, all the young men who had issued invitations were at the station with chaperons to greet the guests. Of course everyone knew each other,--all except Mary whose face scanned the gay crowd in vain hope of recognizing Scott. He simply wasn't there. But two youths and a chaperon soon located Mary, told her there had been some hitch, and asked her to accompany them to the University where Scott was awaiting her. Mary felt a

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Mary felt a slight misgiving, fearing that Scott might be ill but the cab that carried them to the University made good time and before she knew it, they were in the reception room of the Girls' Dormitory. There Scott was waiting for her.

Presentations were made, and the two youths who had met her at the station withdrew an appropriate distance.

Scott was certainly grand looking, Mary thought, but he doesn't look a bit the way he used to, and he does seem quite up-set. Why hadn't he come to the train, she wondered,--these and half a dozen other questions that flashed through her mind as Scott stammered in opening the conversation.

Frankly, Mary was shocked by his opening sentence. "Miss Mary," he faltered, "I have been guilty of an unforgivable hoax. My name is Scott Mithers, and I received your first letter addressed to Scott Mithers whom I do not know. My name is so nearly identical to the one you wrote, that I had opened your letter and read it throughout before I realized that someone had made a mistake, in fact, under the circumstances, I even foresaw the possibility that the letter was in reality intended for me, since my address was correct, save for the 's' at the end of my name, and I really intended to carry out the joke in my first response to you. But when your letter came back in response to mine, I was seized with a desire to further the correspondence that had come about in a manner which I could not understand clearly. I didn't correct the impression on your part, for fear of breaking off the correspondence completely. I suppose there may be such a person as Scott Mithers, but I have never heard of him, and it does seem curious that there should be such an individual with a name so closely akin to mine. I didn't think it fair to surprise you with this story at the station and so I sent two of my friends on my behalf, together with a chaperon."

Naturally Mary was floored, but Scott was too embarrassed to notice it. He said nothing.

Scott continued: "Although I have secretly hoped that I might one day meet you, I frankly did not expect that you would be ~~xxxxxxx~~ accept the invitation. But after you had, I didn't have the courage to cancel the invitation, and now after having hopelessly staggered farther and farther into the quick sand, there only remains one thing for me to do. I do beg your forgiveness, and I should be delighted if you would remain as my guest during this week-end, but I naturally realize that you cannot accept such an invitation which has been characterized by such conniving on my part through out."

It was then that Mary spoke for the first time, and the sound of her voice almost stunned Scott,--not so much from its ~~unxxx~~ measured restraint but the more because of what she said.



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March 6th - Wednesday.

Coffee came a little earlier this morning. Frank had understood that Hobina wanted to leave for Shreveport a little earlier than usual, and since I wanted to ride a little way with her, he had accordingly got things under way at a good hour which pleased me much.

We started about seven under a glorious clear blue sky and a temperature that was perfect. It seemed as though every mule in the Parish must have been hitched to a plough this morning for on every side, save in the pastures and swamps, the cotton fields were being worked on in preparation for this year's sowing.

As we drove along we spoke again of the story of remarkable coincidence which Hobina had told me yesterday as we were crossing the Ferry on the Mississippi. This is how it goes:

Fifteen or twenty years ago, two substantial families were living in Shreveport, one named Smithers and the other Mayse. The Smithers were oil millionaires while the Mayses were modestly well to do. Scott Smithers was one of the sons of the former family who went to the same grade school that Mary Layse attended. They were school friends, as friendships go in those early years.

When college time arrived Scott Smithers and his family had moved their residence to some other city, in fact the Smithers and the Mayses hadn't seen each other since Scott and Mary started high school. Mary went to college in Memphis, I believe, and one day some of her class mates, returning from a holiday spoke of various parties they had attended, and one of the girls mentioned Scott Smithers' attention to her. Mary's interest in the conversation quickened at the sound of the name and before long she was writing him a letter. Scott had been entertained.

Mary went to school at Memphis, and one day after a vacation period when some of her class mates returned from a holiday spent at Washington and Lee University, she suddenly found herself running over childhood memories when one of her friends mentioned Scott Smithers' name on the list of youths with whom she had danced at the University ball. Within a few days, Mary had taken her pen in hand to address a courtesy note of remembrance to her little friend of high school days. Promptly a reply from Scott came back, and then followed a brisk correspondence. It is the custom at mid-year time for the college boys of Washington and Lee to entertain young ladies of their choice at a round of festivals, starting with a costume ball, the costumes for the young ladies being provided by their escorts, according to an old custom of the University. Mary, the fore, was delighted but not surprised when she received an invitation asking her to be Scott's guest at this social event. He even suggested that if she wished, he would be glad to write a note to her parents, asking their consent that she accept his invitation to come up to Kentucky for the event. Mary was home when she received this letter. Mrs. Mayse saw it, too, but inclined to frown on an acceptance, but Mr. Mayse favored it, and so accordingly Mary

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and so Mary, like scores of other girls sent measurements of her own figure,--a couple of sizes smaller than she normally conceded her measurements to be. It is said that the costume makers are so accustomed to this human frailty that the costumes are always cut with this in mind.

Within a short time, it was time for Mary to ~~leave~~ leave Memphis for the Kentucky City,--possibly Lexington, where the University is located. One can imagine that she looked forward with unusual pleasure to this meeting of an old friend of grammar school days,--the regard for the youth having been augmented by the delightful correspondence which had flowed along briskly since Mary's first letter to Scott.

When the train came to a stop, Mary ~~with~~ bubbling over with joy and the pleasure of seeing her old friend, wondered, as a fleeting wave of misgiving, if she would recognize her friend. There were several other girls on the train with Mary who were making the trip, and she noticed that they were greeted promptly by the young men who were to be their hosts. But Mary didn't see Scott's face. Possibly he had been detained. But she had little time for reflection before two college boys with a motherly chaperon, approached her, saying that there had been a slight mix-up and that they had come for Scott to welcome her and to escort her to the campus dormitory where all the young ladies were to be housed during their week-end stay as guest of the University.

Mary was naturally concerned as to what had happened to Scott, and after asking anxiously if the boys broke down and confessed that in reality she had come as the guest of Scott Smithers, and that he had thought it more fair to her to send an escort to receive her and acquaint her with the fact that during the past months she had in reality been corresponding with Scott Smithers rather than Scott Smithers, who didn't even attend Washington and Lee.

Odd as it was that there should have been a student at the University whose name so closely coincided with Scott Smithers, but even more surprising, perhaps, was Mary's reaction. For Mary was equal to the occasion, smiling apologizing for having been the object of so much inconvenience on the part of her escorts, she said she would be delighted to meet her correspondent, whom she had found so fine during their postal relationship, and so accompanied the embarrassed youths to the guest house, along with the other young ladies who had been on the same train with her.

Shortly after ward, Scott Smithers was presented to Mary. She received him kindly and tried to brush aside his humiliation. She found him handsome and he found her beautiful. She thanked him for his courtesy in inviting her to be his guest, and he apologized for the hoax he had perpetrated. To his surprise, Mary went ahead with her plans for the week end's entertainment, and at the costume ball she danced every dance with her.



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There was no question about it Scott was an attractive youth, and ~~xxxxxxxx~~ it is easily understandable how Mary appeared about the most unusual person in the world to Scott.

Somehow, as it always does, the story of the hoax leaked out. The university authorities wrote to Mary's parents to express their regrets, and so did Scott, and Mary arrived at home about the same time the letters did. Mr. Mayse was furious~~xxxx~~, couldn't wait until a train left for Lexington to get his hands on the youth, while Mary's mother laid a restraining hand on her husband's shoulder, reminding him that although she had opposed the original acceptance of

the invitation on Mary's part, he had really favored it, that Mary had handled the matter like a ~~lxxx~~ lady, to win the applause and admiration of those who saw her handle this baffling problem, and that there was no ~~xxx~~ need for him to stir up trouble where troubled had been laid.

At that moment, Mary's father didn't know it, but Mary had again taken her pen in hand, and a brisk correspondence had started up ~~xxxxxxxx~~ between her and Scott Mither.

This is as far as the story has gone up to now, except the added detail that the Mither boy is of a substantial family in Kentucky, is a fine boy, and has, so far as any one knows, only once proved himself human by having erred this once. He certainly erred considerably and daringly, but Mary, it appears, likes it, and Scott contents himself with the thought that the end justified the means, and both these young people have become the best of friends.

By the time we had finished going over this story, it was time for me to say goodbye to Robina, which I did, returning to Elrose a little after ten.

I spent the ~~xxxxxx~~ rest of the day working at my typewriter, and after supper sat with the Adam for a while, talking of Hibodeaux, and the Louisiana countryside which we both love so well.

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March 7th - Thursday.

Another beautiful day, with the temperature just right for labor which I stuck to pretty ~~thxxx~~ thoroughly all morning.

Dinner and the mail, and an account of another old home, Ingleside, burning in ~~atchez~~.

Aunt Sammie and I made a little tour of the gardens, the result of which was refreshed floral decoration for my maisonette,--white narcissus, yellow narcissus, blue hyacinthes, and a huge bouquet of magnolias.

Afterwards I worked at my machine, while the Adam, who had hoped to take a nap, was prevented from doing so by visitors, Charles having come up from Little River to talk about flowers with her and what he proposes to plant about his house, and then the Gibsons who wanted to talk quilts, I believe.

In the evening, we sat in the Adam's room turning through the volume of American State Papers having to do with the registration of early land claims and titles.

Of the Foster family in which we both were particularly interested, we found more than we wanted, for on St. Catherine's Creek where Foster's mound is located, we found grants of land to Moses Foster, Levi Foster, Mary Foster, John Foster, William Foster James Foster and Thomas Foster. All these were granted in the 1780's, so it would appear that the Foster's were quite a tribe in ~~atchez~~ in those days, and as for which owned what slave, the plot thickened.

Just for fun we peaked in the Index to see if any Erwin's lurked there and found both Joseph and Isaac Erwin, Aunt Sammie's grandfather and great grand father.

We said goodnight at eight as usual, and eventually I went to bed.



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March 8th - Friday.

The perfection of the weather still holds.

Aside for a little tour of the gardens before breakfast, I staid at my desk all morning, save for a visit at coffee time from Aunt Cammie, Celeste, and a little later, the Dr. and his wife.

Dinner and the mail with interesting clippings from "Anhattan," and a fine letter from "R. Peterson, who was one of the architects who were here last week to record "Elrose for the "Historic Buildings Survey.

The Sanitation Department's representative came in the afternoon to play the ~~will~~ role of Pied Piper of Hamelin, with some curious food that he guarantees death to rats, although it is quite harmless to dogs. One of the darkies told me it wouldn't kill cats, either, but "would jus' make 'em puke". It must be a miraculous potion. Later in the afternoon Frank told me he had seen a huge big rat staggering down the road, so I guess the poison must be working.

During the afternoon some friends of Dan's called, -- a "Mrs. Hart and a "Mr. and Mrs. Hughes. I think they were from Natchitoches.

After supper, the "Adam and I read for a time from the State Papers, and then I said goodnight, after she had urged me to sleep in Lyle cabin to see how I liked the difference between his house and mine. And so on leaving the big house, I went to Lyle's, lighted a fire and slept in his big four poster. He has always been so much talk about "Uncle Israel's ghost in Lyle's house, for Aunt Cammie nursed the old slave there for many years before Lyle put the house back in order. Uncle Israel and his wife had both lived out their lives there, and so I had hoped their ghosts might visit me, since various people have said they still hover around the place. I am sorry to record, however, that I wasn't conscious of their visit, if indeed they actually did make one during the night. The only unusual event or coincident was that both the great grand father clock in the bedroom and the alarm clock on the living room both stopped between the hour of eleven and twelve. Possibly I can attribute this to "Uncle Israel, particularly as the grandfather clock had not run down.

I noticed that the clocks when I awoke some time before dawn, but I went back to sleep again until the dawn arrived, -- so much more subtly that it does in my maisonette, since my great fan window faces the east, while Lyle's windows fact north and south, and the light is further subdued by the roof over the galleries on which the windows open.

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March 9th - Saturday.

I didn't stay in bed at Lyle's until Frank came with coffee, but rather came home a little after six, so that I was here just before he arrived.

I did a flock of letters before coffee time, chatted with the "Adam for a bit, entertained a couple members of the family, and brushed aside one matter to their entire satisfaction. I had arranged the beautifully old stained glass on the sill of my great window, so the "Adam and I could enjoy it while we took coffee. Its colors glowed magnificently in the morning light. The guests scarcely noticed it when they entered, but a little later asked where I got it. I passed it off as of no consequence, saying I had found these stray peices in the crockery section of "resses Five and Ten Cent Store, and since the beauty didn't knock down the questioner's imperviousness to such regal splendor, they dismissed it without a second glance in that direction. They are fortunate, perhaps, that they don't know whence it came, and I, for me, am glad that they can appreciate its value.

Dinner and I had hoped for mail at the same time, but somehow the man didn't come until nearly three o'clock today.

Three people came from the "ormal to search for data in Aunt Cammie's scrapbooks, -- on the gneral subject of shrimp-fishing, I believe, which Aunt Cammie has included in her books on Louisiana Industries.

A little later th Dr. 's wife arrived with "Mrs. Rand who had come up from Alexandria with four people who wanted to see the "Elrose gardens.

Some of the women wanted to see Lyle's cabin, and the Dr.'s wife guided them to and about the place. He explained Pere Augustin as the man who appeared in Lyle's "Children of the Strangers" and who built the little church ~~in the picture~~ which appears in the background of the portrait of "Pere Augustin.

One of the ladies asked about the portraits of the wife man and his mulato son, -- one of the most interesting pictures I know. The "Dr.'s wife dismissed it by saying that it was just a couple of niggers.

Supper, and the guests eventually got out before it was served. Afterwards the Madam and I read the mail, -- "Natchez, "New York and "Shreveport, and looked at the phtos that Lyle had taken on Monday of "Uncle Sam.

We spoke for a little while about the old house in Washington, La., which we want to visit next week to go over the old books in the attic, of our next trip to "Natchez and Fort Gibson, -- and so to bed.



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March 10th - Sunday.

The good weather still holds,--marvelously blue and oceans of sunshine. I like it, too, because it means that I arise earlier, and Frank comes just as early on Sundays as on weekdays, - making it possible for me to get under way in the same schedule scheme as I liked to maintain in Manhattan.

Aunt Ammie came over for coffee,--the last breathing spell before the usual Sunday rumpus of guests which constitute Sundays at Elrose. Over our demi-tasse, we spoke of various doings inatchitoches in years gone by, of the famous Markoe house at Monet's Ferry, so many windows and doors of which Aunt Ammie rescued when that old mansion was being pulled down. We talked of the man who had built the house early in the 1800's, and how he had left it to his nephew, Markoe, who was interested in the arts, and especially in contemporary painting, as is evidenced by the great number of portraits he had made of himself by New Orleans artists--and the wife who lived in the plantation region in and about this locality. Aunt Ammie recalled that some one had told her of what disposition was made of these beautifully framed portraits when Markoe died and one Levy inherited the place, for the later, not so appreciative of the oils and pastels, ripped out the portraits, slung them down the river embankment and then sold the gorgeous frames for whatever he could get for them.

Came dinner and mildly interesting conversation with much family and Charles Hazarette who had come up from Little River. We talked of One With The Wind. Paine hated to loose the four hours required to see it, but a customer rather insisted on taking him and so he was forced to endure the misery. He is the first I have heard who didn't relish the first showing and were impatient to see it a second time.

It was rather criminal on such a fine day to spend all afternoon indoors, but I had a lot of work I wanted to do, and so worked until four o'clock when the Dr. came over to read me a Times Magazine article about the demolition of Uncle Sam and engineer other conversation which I didn't subscribe to.

Supper and everyone departed, leaving the Adam and me to make a little tour of the garden and contemplate the unusually fine display of magnolias with trees bearing huge blossoms that varied from tree to tree from snow white to almost purple black. The sunset was intense in coloring, somehow suggesting a mighty cyclonic disturbance somewhere. The thousands of blackbirds that pause temporarily at Elrose on their migration northward made the trees black with their density, and the air vibrated with the swish of their wings and their multitudinous night calls. J. A. came over to talk for a few minutes, and at eight we all said good night.

March 11th - Monday.

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Last night's storm didn't develope after all but on the contrary the sky was bluer than usual when I awoke a little before dawn this morning.

While I was having my breakfast, Sam Brown came in to see me, with much news as to Elam Brown, the man who seems to have been suffering for the past month from pneumonia. Sam says that the man still has the tube in his lung and that he has suddenly given up eating after having been so ravenous during the early stages of his illness. Now, it seems, he doesn't want to eat anything, and his body is just a scrawny mass of flesh and bone. Sam asked me if it could have poisoned Elam if anyone should have put a spider in his food. I told him I thought not. Sam says that Elam's old father and some of his brothers think there is surely going to be a fuss and that it will end up with a killing. Elam is staying with one of his brothers in a cabin near Elrose, and in the evening Elam's wife leave their five small children in their cabin back toward little river and comes up to take care of him. It seems the eldest of the children is a little boy of about 10. When his mother doesn't come home for a day or two, he is able to prepared food for himself and the rest of the brood,--he even can stir up a little cornbread, according to Sam. Sam says that Elam used to make good money, but when he did, he and his wife just made a track up and down the big road from their house to the saloon and back. Now his relatives will do little for him, and it appears the children must do much for themselves. Civilization, missionaries, human relations, economics, Oh, Lord, how white are the fields for the harvest in this black belt of seething society..

Dinner and the mail with further particulars from the Buildings Survey Office, Mr. Peterson advising us of his request to the War Department that they issue an executive order restraining further demolition of Uncle Sam until complete measurements, at least, have been recorded.

I worked all afternoon at my machine, stopping only at supper time. In the evening we read alone before the Franklin stove, and I retired about eight thirty, in contemplation of any early walk on the morrow.



March 12th - Tuesday.

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"nother glorious day, so I guess the storm that threatened night before last must have completely changed its mind.

I walked a little beyond Montrose, rode for a ways and then returned mostly a-foot, arriving home a little after eleven. Celeste was in front of her house when I turned in her drive, and she asked me to have a drink before dinner which I gladly accepted. J. A. came from his office for dinner, asked me to stay as did Celeste, but I declined, since the Adam would be expecting me.

After dinner I decided on a little nap as soon as I had had a cold shower, and I did fold up for a spell. Sam Brown came shortly afterwards, however, and said that the Adam was having coffee in Mr. Ayle's cabin and would I come over to meet some guests. I dressed and went over to meet a youth and maiden from Dallas,--I am not certain of his name, Mr. Steck, it sounded like, and the lady was a Miss Marshall. They were charming. They had been in Atchez for the Pilgrimage and I was of course delighted to get all the latest news hot off the griddle. Frankly I didn't learn anything astonishingly new, but it would appear from little nothings that everything in Atchez is running true to form.

The Dr. and Sister were here for supper and when they had gone the rest of the evening Aunt Ammie and I spent in reading from the fine collection of clippings that had come in today's mail, including a very interesting account of the paintings by the Southern artist, Walker, etchings of Williamsburgh, etc., etc.,

I heard a tale of local disturbance that took place on Sunday. Again it was a feud between boys from town who were calling on girls of this neighborhood,--all mulattoes, of course, with an attempt on the part of the local youths to beat the town boys. I saw one black eye. It is curious how these young boys in their twenties itch for a fight among themselves, but never get out of hand so far as the color line goes.

Between eight-thirty and nine a terrific storm broke, blinding flashes of lightning with attendant crashing of thunder and a down pour of rain that lasted for several hours. I thought of Elam Brown's little children alone in the little cabin back on Little River and wondered what all this confusions of the elements affected them.

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March 13th - Wednesday.

The blue sky was all blotted out with rain clouds when I awoke this morning. I was glad I had taken a walk the day before since it would have been rather unpleasant going on such a damp chilly day.

While I was having breakfast, I listened to news reports on the radio telling of the destruction done by the tornado which struck Shreveport yesterday afternoon at four o'clock. I suppose the storm must have circled around since it reached her some ninety miles south only eight hours after it had torn through the city. Ten or twelve people were reported killed and much property destroyed. I thought much of Abina and hoped that all was well with her. One of those most seriously injured,--and I believe he died during the night was a prominent citizen whose name I cannot recall. Years ago he was a simple citizen, honest, kindly and poor. He struck oil, and over night became tremendously rich. He didn't know what to do with his money, nor did his wife. He employed a couple of people to write books for him which he had published under his own name. He presented autographed copies to Aunt Ammie and Lyle. They were terrible. He went ~~xxx~~ to Europe for quite a tour, and decided while there that he would purchase art treasures for the edification of Shreveport. He did so, but what the value of his purchases amounted to has been a matter of opinion ever since, with the poor rich man being mostly in the minority. After he had returned home he set about having the examples of Art properly displayed. Among other things he had one marble statue added to a bit, since the figure was a nude and he thought it better to have a marble Turkish towel appropriately draped about it. I must think to ask Aunt Ammie this poor man's name.

I worked at my typewriter all morning, and in the afternoon I started out to call on Felix Laurenz who lives hard by the Convent on the other side of the river. Tony was going towards home and so he walked along with me, and I was glad for when we reached Felix's house we found him out, so we went inside and chatted with a little girl who lives with Felix and his wife Pearl, who is Frank's sister. We talked much about school what they are taught, etc., etc. According to the girl and to Tony, some of the teachers are pretty strict. Tony said his teacher used to smash his head against the blackboard when he made a mistake,--rather energetic for black robbed nuns, I should say. The little girl said that the teacher some times clapped them on the finger with a ruler if they didn't hold their pencils correctly.

We waited for about an hour for Felix, while the rain pour down outside. Finally about four he arrived, and immediately set to work giving me a haircut. He elaborated details regarding the feud that had flared in front of his house on Sunday night. Later I learned that J. A. suggested the ~~xx~~ defenders of Sunday night attack the aggressors at the first opportunity. I can't subscribe to the wisdom of such a suggestion. I packed home just in time for supper, and so for a pleasant two hours of reading with Aunt Ammie. I slept in Ayle's cabin, but haven't yet seen Uncle Isreal's ghost.



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March 14th, - Thursday.

Up early and over from Lyle's cabin where I had spent the night to my house where I arrived before Frank came with my breakfast. He had found me asleep in Lyle's house, had made a good fire while I slept, but I had awakened in time to grab off a cup of coffee before he had left. I was accordingly enchanted to find he had made another good fire in my big fireplace which was burning brightly when I reached home.

A little after seven, I romped through my bath, and by seven thirty, Aunt Cammie and I were in the big road, Davis driving. I must remark in passing that Davis is black, is son-in-law of Clemence, and is known variously by different plantation groups as Davis, Clyde or Emmet. I never did understand just how he was known to all by these several names, but as different groups seem to use different names in speaking to him or of him, there is never any question in one's mind as to whom is being referred to.

We arrived in Alexandria about nine,--a glorious blue and sunshiny day, with a cool breeze blowing. We stopped to pick up Mrs. Rand at her home, and found Carolyn Orman there, although she might have been better busied if she had been with the 60 or 70 men who are working under her direction in their landscaping of Alexandria public buildings under a P. W. A. or W.P.A. grant. There was considerable talk about the flowers in Mrs. Rand's garden, and a little about the seedling bed which Carolyn has reserved for herself in the Rand garden to which are brought certain cuttings from Carolyn's projects, nursed here, and eventually sent by Carolyn to her home, Briarwood for the nurseries she is propagating there.

Eventually we said goodbye to Carolyn and headed south, traveling along the main highway to Bunkie,--the only town in the world named after a mechanical toy, according to Lyle, and thence south-west toward Washington. Mrs. Rand knows this country very well, having traveled it much as a child in horse-and-buggy days with her father, Judge White, when he was practicing law in this region.

I had expected Washington to be much larger than it is, but its small population lends it the peculiar charm that always seems to evaporate when a village merges into something larger. There were a few interesting houses, but we didn't stop. In the environs are the Lastrapes house, built in 1801 and the Spran house and Barbec, too. We continued to push along, noting little "islands" of great oaks here and there indicating old plantation houses, in some cases still standing and in others vanished.

A little after eleven we reached the house, three or four miles outside Lafayette, where Aunt Cammie and Mrs. Rand were to call on their friend who is hopelessly ill. I believe the name may be spelled Dabillion, although they pronounce it as though it were spelled "Divine". The house stands not far from the road,

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Thursday,--<sup>14</sup> March 16th possibly.

The house stands not far from the road, but completely hidden from it by beautifully massed flowering shrubs and trees. It is approached from the side, and seems to have been built of old red brick, although I believe the house was erected not more than 15 years or so ago. From the front of the house, the lawn stretch slowly down an incline, possibly 300 feet or more, irregularly bordered by brilliant purple azalias, camellia japonicas, sidonia japonica, etc., etc., with charming little rustic lily pools stepping down from the right side of the garden a short distance from the house. The gallery of the house isn't not cible, what with the screening and vines, but in stepping inside the front door one is impressed by the unusually large room, long and two stories high, with a great window that fills the west end of the room completely. Bookshelves and closets run along the north wall up to about 8 or 10 feet, broken half way along the wall by a huge modern brick fireplace. The woodwork of the room is very dark, as are the broken beam of the ceiling, and all the woodwork and windows are somehow Gothic if anything, but much too much of the Renaissance to seem very harmonious with South Louisiana.

I lingered with Mr. Dabillion in this ~~fine~~ enormous, long room while the ladies went to chat with his wife who has been in bed these passed six months. Mr. Dabillion told me much of oil, accompanying salt domes in this region, who the oil is brought to the service and a hundred and one other things on the subject. It is said that last Sunday he and some relatives had an oil well "come in" last Sunday on property only a few miles away, and it is expected that this will bring them a pleasant fortune or two.

Sometime during the day I had overheard that Mr. Dabillion and his wife had always been very happy, save for the fact that they had had no children. The story of their wedded life is rather interesting for staid members of the community as they are,--Mr. Dabillion being a prominent Lafayette lawyer. It seems that some years back they were both married to two other people, and that someone gave a little house party in which three married couples comprised the group. At the party it was decided that somehow the husbands and wives had been mis-mated, and so a switch was agreed upon then and there, and so Mr. Dabillion relinquished his wife to another one of the guest, while for himself he took the other man's wife. It is said that no legal procedure was ever undertaken, so that now there is one Mrs. Dabillion and only one Mrs. Dabillion who goes by that name, although in reality she never did release herself from the name of her first husband legally.

We had a very pleasant dinner, and afterwards Mr. Dabillion had to run back to his office in town, and so an hour later Aunt Cammie, Mrs. Rand and I started for St. Martinsville on Bayou Teche. Along the route we passed through Breau Bridge, where, I believe, Aunt Cammie's grandmothe,--Picot, had lived her first 13 or 15 years before she was married at that tender age as the second wife of Esac Erwin. A short time before reaching



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Before reaching St. Martinsville, we also stopped to take a hurried look at St. John's Plantation. Unfortunately it is rather near a large sugar mill, although the latter is not within sight of the house, although a little too close to it to give one the full flavor of being in the country. There are lovely short alleys of live-oak, and others of magnolia at St. John's plantation, and the original old house still stands there, too, at the end of the central avenue of trees. It is a pity that some modern contraption for air-conditioning, has been constructed on the roof to horribly mar its appearance.

Shortly afterwards we crossed the Leche and were in St. Martinsville,--not a large place and just a little depressing like a fair late afternoon in April when a storm of rain has melted away before a setting sun but has somehow left a feeling of dampness and the realization that after things have dried up during the night, the morrow may seem to hold the promise of a better day.

I was disappointed that the old theatre stood no more,--the one where in ante-bellum days the Paris opera had come each season from New Orleans to appear here in this little town before the assembled plantation lords who with their lovely ladies made up the most if not entire audience.

We visited the fine church--a church which according to the legend or rather the inscription on its front tablet states that it was built in 1765,--a fact which I wonder about, since the edifice seems much too grand and extensive to date from that period. The windows are particularly pleasing with wonderfully colored panes of stained glass. We drove about the town a bit, enjoying the sight of the Post Office,--a beautiful old colonial mansion which has been recently been done over in excellent taste, the old court house with lovely corinthian columns,--also ante-bellum and several old homes along the Bayou, as well as the reputed Evangeline Oak and a statue put up to the lady by some enterprising Hollywood publicity machine when a picture bearing that famous longfellow title was released.

From town, we drove out a few miles to Fine Alley, a really remarkable avenue of great live oaks, pines and crepe myrtle which stretches for over a mile from the main road straight through the flat sugar cane fields to where in ante-bellum times stood the great mansion before the Yankees passed that way. The road is of pulverized oyster shells, and must be unbelievably beautiful when a great full moon makes patches of black and white marble by the velvety patches of moonlight and shade along the finest of plantation avenues I have ever seen.

We reentered St. Martinsville, heading toward home, and stopping only once at the Lastrape Home near Washington. In the garden of this old 1801 home stand the famous seven live oaks, all growing out of the same spot. It is said that one night, just as the war between the states was breaking out, the owner of the old home brought seven small live oaks with him one evening, putting them

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putting the trees in the ground temporarily for appropriate planting on the morrow. That night he was called away to war, from which he never returned, and the good wife left the oaks there to awaiting his transplanting of them. As a result they have grown where they were originally placed, so that now they are old and gnarled, and present a very unique impression on the passing visitor.

The architects from the "I tore Buildings Survey who were here at Elrose a week or so back, had told of the old books and papers that were in the attic of the Lastrapes house. It was about these that I consulted the rather untutored white man who was living in the house which is sadly in need of repair. He told me that the papers belonged to Mr. Leon Lastrapes who lived in Washington and that I could have them if he said it was alright. He added however, that it was difficult to get at them as they were in the attic to which one could ascend only by means of a ladder, and that they were "of no account anyway", since some of the covers were already off and much of the writing was of no interest anyway since most of the items were from 75 to a hundred years old, since no one had either taken any out or put any in there since that ancient date. I of course interpreted the value differently, but thanked him for his time. On my way out, I noticed an unusually large iron sugar bucket of cast iron,--I should guess it was about eight or ten feet across the top and probably about four feet deep. It was being used as a watering trough for cattle.

And so we sped along toward home, with a beautifully sunset glowing in the west, and pleasantly tired from our day of visiting and sight-seeing. We dropped Mrs. Lastrape in Alexandria, talking with Mr. Lastrape and, her husband, for a few moments, and so on to Elrose which we reached about 8:30.

Obviously Sam Brown had been doing a bit of house cleaning in my maisonette during my absence, for everything was every which way, but it was a little cool, and so I just lighted my fire, glanced at a ~~xxxxx~~ magazine or two, noted the death of John Finley whom I had admired for so long, and so hopped into bed.



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March 15th - Friday.

Income tax day, and I don't have to pay any this year, so as some one once so wisely remarked before - "no great loss without some small gain".

While I was feeding my pet turkeys this morning, Henry came along and we remarked upon the beauty of the white gobbler with the black line of decoration running through the width of his tail. I told Henry I should so much like a fan made from it, and he told me it could be done, and that if I would get Frank to cut off the Pope's nose when the turkey is finished off for a banquet, he would make a fine article for me. I must begin trying to stimulate people's appetites at the big house for the taste of the great American bird. At Thanksgiving time the poor birds almost broke my heart with their mournful croaking the night before their executioner descended upon them but somehow I don't seem so sentimental about this big white fellow,--possibly because he isn't so tame as the others were or possibly because I have thought of how pleased someone might be with a gorgeous fan made from his pretentious tail-feathers. How long have I remarked upon the curious operation of affection when great love for one individual or object cancels much consideration for others.

In the afternoon I told Aunt Mammie I was going over to call on Eline. Aunt Mammie said she wanted to send her something, and while I was finishing my Journal, she slipped off the skirt she was wearing and sent it over to my house for me to present to Eline. I had heard of people giving anyone the skirt off the back, but this is the first instance I have known of a skirt off the hips.

I found Eline and Joe entertaining one or two other people in their humble cabin, so I didn't stay as long as I usually do, for conversation centered much around neighbors I didn't know, but Eline did tell me on morsel of information that amused me: She said that "The Cassion" lay is at the Saloon,--an astonishing bit of intelligence, I thought before I realized she referred to an emporium up the river a ways where a saloon incorporates a large hall under its roof where movies are occasionally shown.

Supper and a couple of hours before the Franklin stove where Celeste joined us awaiting J. H.'s return from Baton Rouge where he has spent the day. We read from the "Natchez Democrat" regarding entertainments and visitors to this year's Natchez Pilgrimage. Among other things the paper spoke of a dinner being given my "Mr. and Mrs. Catherine Miller". I'll bet the husband, Mr. Balfour Miller like that. I said goodnight at eight, and so eventually to bed.

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March 16th - Saturday.

It was good to awaken a little before, to observe for a little while the wonders of the heavens in the hour before dawn and so in wonder and awe, witness the approach of another day.

I breakfasted between six and seven and so walked a few miles, rode for a few more, visited the American cemetery in Natchitoches, listened to a conversation of a couple of laborers whose words attracted me when one of them said to the other: "Et, alors, le pillway est casse". I hadn't heard of the Cane River spillway having broken up, and wondered what would happen to the lake if that should happen, but later discovered that they must have been referring to some other dam.

In town Paine stopped for me and we drove home together, arriving before ten to have coffee with Aunt Mammie. I got out so mail and then joined the family and Charles from Little River for an early dinner.

Aunt Mammie and Charles drove to Blountville to pick up sister and thence to Alexandria to Sam Stokes' place outside of town to buy various plants for their several homes, with Aunt Mammie buying sweet olive trees and what not for Betty in Texas.

I spent the afternoon at my machine, going to the store at about five to get some tobacco. While there I waited for the clerk to take care of a nicely dressed colored man who was buying some printed cotton material for what I imagined might well be for his wife to make herself a fine East frock. After he had found the man's design that pleased him, he said he needed six yards. I recalled that this is about the amount needed for a frock for some people. He asked the clerk how much it was and the clerk said it was fifteen cents a yard. The man wanted to know how much that would make the six yards cost and the clerk told him ninety cents. There was a moment of hesitation on the darkie's part, for he obviously didn't have that much money. And so he wanted to know how much five yards would cost and how much four yards would come to. The rest of the story is of no interest, but up to this point it had been enough to make my heart a little heavy as I thought of how difficult it would be to carry out a sale under these circumstances if I were a clerk.

Eugene, Dan, J. H. and I had supper alone, with J. H. and me talking Natchez Pilgrimage finance all during the brief meal. Aunt Mammie returned a little after six, and together with Charles who is staying all night, we talked over the belated supper table Aunt Mammie spoke of her admiration of "Mr. and Mrs. Stokes, now in their seventies, who have made their unpretentious muries so famous throughout Alexandria and Louisiana itself. Some difficulty their son once got into landed him in jail from where he sent for his parents to come to bail him out but "Mrs. Stokes wouldn't go, saying he had gotten himself in and he could get himself out, but of course "Mr. Stokes went. This reminded Aunt Mammie of the man who was about to be hanged and who asked as a final grace if he might whisper one word to his Aunt who was present. The grace was granted and the youth forthwith bit his aunt's ear off, remarking that "if



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March 16th - concluded.

the youth remarking: "There, if you had brought me up properly, I wouldn't be hanged today".

Somehow this lead around to old stories that had come down to Aunt Cammie from her mother and from old slaves whom Aunt Cammie had known in years gone by. The story from her mother was to the effect that an old man married an old woman with the understanding that he would inherit her property, but the first night the old woman was to sleep on the roof. All during the night, the man would call to her asking "Are you cold, old woman", to which she inevitably replied "No". In the morning the old woman rolled off the roof and was killed in the fall. "Neither Aunt Cammie nor I could figure out what the point of the story might be.

From old Aunt Jane, the former slave whom Aunt Cammie nursed in the old darkies declining years, Aunt Cammie said that sometimes after a conversation in the big house, Aunt Jane would hurry out to attend to her work, remarking as she left: "A child's born and named Anthony". Often Aunt Cammie would call the old darkie back, asking her what she meant by that saying, but the old woman never could elucidate.

While Charles went to the store, Aunt Cammie and I ran through the mail which included a couple of letters from the Historic Buildings Survey from St. Louis, telling us of an order of stay which the War Department had issued so that Uncle Sam could be measured before demolition, and also telling us of how we could obtain information in "atchez as to the location of the "evolutionary mansion, --the Chamberlain house,--built on an Indian Mound some 15 miles north east of Natchez.

And so at eight we said goodnight.

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March 17th - Sunday.

St. Patrick's day and one which is more like summer than I have ever known. I had intended to sleep in Lyle's house, but sat down before my own fireside for a few minutes at eight last night and the next thing I knew it was ten minutes after four. And so I decided to sleep in my own house, although I did take a little walk first, the baby moon was so pleasantly adjusted to the brilliance of the sky, making heaven and earth and all the lights of the Universe seem so evenly apportioned in value that everything in the skies above and the earth below seemed a part and parcel of each other, having been fused by some greater power that in the "outh somehow seems to dissolve all things together and yet leave them their own identity. I thought too of Sir Walter Scott's line in his poem about Saint Cloud: "Soft spreads the southern summer's night, her ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ veil of darksome blue".

Frank arrived a little after six and breakfast was over and out of the way before seven. A little afterwards, Sam Brown came by, primarily, I suppose for a cup of coffee which I offered him. I was anxious to have a report on "lam Brown. He is supposed to be a little better,--lam is,--lam's feet are swollen, he takes a glass of milk once in a while, the Dr. says as soon as he gets a little stronger, he will be taken back to town to have a couple of ribs removed. Sam is uncertain if that will be beneficial. "lam eats candy, aside from the milk, and he also dips snuff and chews tobacco.

Sam says "lam's five little children came over from the "ittle River cabin to see their father yesterday. Sam says it was pitiful to see the five of them trudging home at sunset last night alone. "Plum near" the cabin where the five little children are staying alone, one of "irkland's cows died on "riday. Some of "irkland's men skinned it and left the carcass there by the cabin. Sam says the smell of the carcass blows right into the little cabin where the children live. "e says, too,--giving a certain implied importance as an portent, that vultures will be sitting on the little cabin today. Oh, word, consider the sparrow.....

The morning coffee hour rolled around, and Aunt Cammie came over to pass an hour with me before the daily or rather Sunday rumpus of guests began. "he seemed tired. We had hoped to read a little together but "lemence came and wanted to see the pictures Aunt Cammie had taken of her with her dolls before Christmas, and she needed some other little items, too. Frank came during this discussion, wearing his Sunday hat, his Sunday coat but his week-day overalls. He had intended to go to church at ten, but "enry hadn't come to tell Frank when he would take him to "erry to get some wire for Aunt Cammie's clotheslines, and so Frank had had to forego the "alm Sunday service. In the midst of this Paine's wife, Frances, arrived, and "enry came shortly afterward, so the Madam had to taken her people with her to straighten out their several wants, leavin' Frances and me together. Frances told me much of Gond With the Wind which she had seen last Sunday in "hrevoport,--and loved.

After dinner, four of us, including Aunt Cammie drove down to Bermuda to call on Beth Williams "loutier.



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March 17th - Concluded.

She and her husband live in the old "arcis" rudhomme house, across the road from the place where the boy who wrote the Diary used to walk with his blackstone under his arm,--I mean the youth ~~xxxx~~ whose diary "yle used in Old Louisiana.

"Eth's house is seemingly modest in size, but it is never-the less generously proportioned as one discovers once inside. It is a long, somewhat low house,--one and a half or two stories high, with five large rooms running across the front, each opening on the gallery that crosses the entire front of the house. Starting from the extreme left, one finds the bed room, the living room, the library, another bed room, and one other room which I seem to have forgot ten. The living room is large, and opposite the entrance from the front gallery one is impressed by a series of transome lights under which are double folding doors, some of glass, that can be thrown wide open to combine this front living room with a room twice as large immediately behind the front living room, and itself in turn opening on a back gallery. On this back side of the house are also bed room, bath, dinning room and kitchen. The upper story or half story has never been finished off during all the hundred years or more since the house was built, but Beth expects to open up dormers in the roof and thus almost double the number of rooms in her house. The house is pleasantly furnished with some very interesting pieces, many of which eth purchased in Marshall, Texas. She has done well by her garden, too, having set out hundreds of bulbs, with the present display being primarily concentrated on caffodills and narcissus. They were in their prime,--a fact that seems odd, since those at "elose have already done blooming for this season.

We were back home a little after three, had coffee, and so sepatated, with guests coming for the big house for an afternoon visit and with my little house awaiting me for a shaving off of my long beard which I had let grow for a day and a half.

At six, Frank came to lay down a fire for me, and to help me fix a zipper which having gone out of kilter rendered my trousers practically useless. In the midst of this one of J. H.'s servants appeared, saying that J. H. and Celeste wanted "unt "ammie and me to go for a ride. We accordingly joined them at the front gate, and road along the "ane as far as Derry, and back up the cement highway as far as Cypress, and hence over to Bermuda, and back home. "e had a cold supper together, and before eight we had all said good night and a little afterward I was in bed.

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March 18th - Monday.

Up at six and after a cup of coffee, I made a little tour around the front gardens to try to locate the large bird with the curious parrot-like voice which made his bow as a new comer yesterday afternoon. I couldn't find him, but there were plenty of cardinals and nightingales to recompense me for my search.

Back home for breakfast before seven, and shortly after a visit from Sam Brown to give me further details regarding the case of Elam Brown. It seems that Elam and his wife are still enjoying battles, even though they may be reduced to mere verbal ones, now that "lam seems to be passing out. Sam also told me of certain performances that went on at the time of the January freeze. One evening the Browns were having a drink-ing bout in the saloon when "lam got a little out of hand, grabbed his wife by the foot, and swinging her over his shoulder, her head dragging in the snow, he started back toward their cabin down "ittle River way. On the road, he came to a large sugar kettle which he decided would be a good recepticle to drown his wife in, so he tossed her into the ditch while he jumped on to the frozen surface of the sugar kettle to break the ice. Fortunately for his wife, the ice was frozen so hard that Elam couldn't make any impression on it. "e therefore gave up that idea, swung his wife over his shoulder again, dragged her through a throne bush, and so on home. Noble doings, I must say, for a man and woman with five small children.

Aunt "ammie came over for coffee and afterward we both concentrated on out-going mail until noon. At dinner, conversation was rather gay. I parrticularly like something that was said of Aunt "ammie's father in law. "t seems one of his sons wanted to employ some one in "rance at a price of one thousand five hundred dollars to trace the Henry family tree, but old "oe Henry, on hearing of it, peeled off a five dollar bill, tossed it to his son, saying: "Here, take this five dollars and run for County "herif. As soon as your opponents hear of your candidacy, they'll tell you more about your ancestry than a flock of geneologists could every find out, and you'll be saying a lot of money to boot."

"With demi-tasse came the mail, and it was good, particularly the New York and Louisiana pieces. There was a letter, too, from Josie Nichols, too, saying that she contemplated re-building "idgefield, the old family home on Bayou "a"ourche which burned last "anuary.

When Frank came with three o'clock coffee, he told us that Elam Brown had just died in front of the store as the ambulance had started to take him to town. I reckon there will be a big wake this evening, and "eaven alone knows what will happen in the near future when the superstition regarding the cause of his illness and death gets to wroking. Surely the least important aspect of the whole business is that Elam died



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March 18th - concluded.

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After coffee Aunt "ammie and I walked about in the flower and vegetable gardens to see how the laborers were getting on but it seemed as though all of them had their minds on this evening's wake rather than on the immediate planting for they were digging holes in the ground any old which-way, stepping on pet bushes that they never even saw after ~~they~~ their attention had been especially called to them, and their talk all revolved around the passing of "Iam Brown.

Eventually "oth "unt "ammie and I got back to our correspondence on which we worked until almost supper time. " included in my letters, one to "r. Babb in Dallas, in regard to the fine stained glass, small pieces of which "unt "ammie has sent to him to make a kaelidoscope.

Supper at five thirty, and afterward some reading on American State papers, and at eight we said good night. It was such a lovely night that "unt "ammie decided to sleep on the porch of the big house, while about nine I went over to "yle's "abin which I like so much. About an hour after I had gone to sleep, I awoke, hearing Grandpa fussing at the screen door which he could open but didn't dare try to enter, remembering, I suppose, the time he got his tail caught in the same door. I was enchanted that he had awakened me with his soft little cry, for it gave me an excuse to get up to let him in and at the same time walk for a little while up and down the front gallery, enjoying the extraordinary brilliance and intense somnolence of the luscious velvet night.

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March 19th - Tuesday.

Another magnificent dawn at "yle's house where I awoke in the great four-poster, with good old Grandpa at my feet. We came back to my house before the sun was up, although "rank was already there with my coffee, busily stirring up a fire on my hearth.

Sam blew in and out of the big house before breakfast, announcing that someone had to dig a grave for Elam and that he guessed he was the one who was "gwine" do it. Bud Williams, the slight scoundrel never did show up at all, but when the Mistress was in the back vegetable garden, supervising the planting, Bud was seen scurrying off toward his house. I reckon,--with some surety, that he had paid a surreptitious visit to "find" some potatoes to plant in his own garden,--today seeming to furnish an excellent opportunity, since everyone would think him busy on funeral affairs.

Aunt "ammie came by for coffee, a little late, and a little annoyed, but rippling with merriment at the performances in the back vegetable garden. Bud had done some ploughing there yesterday afternoon, and had done it so thoroughly that he had turned over all the furrows where the corn had started growing for an earlier planting.

"e got out quite a stack of mail, and in return received quite a bit at dinner time. Sister blew in about two o'clock with a basket of "aste eggs and following in her train was a boy whom she is taking to live with her in "loutierville as a kind of "bonne a tous faire" and a playmate for her baby. The little colored boy is 13 years old, and quite sweet. "ister started giving him lessons immediately, telling him to always take off his hat whenever he saw a white person and that if he ever stole anything she would turn him over to "r. "lack. The little boy seemed mildly bewildered. "ister is buying him some new overalls and undershirts, tells him he will be able to go to the movies once a week, that he will help in the garden, etc., etc. "t seems he is one of a large number of brothers and sisters whose parents have long since been dead. Poor child.....

Aunt "ammie and I explored the "frican House a little later in the afternoon. "t is so cozy on the upper floor, with the overhanging roof all the way round coming way below the open windows, making a perfect screen from both within the house and from the outside. I selected a couple of oils,--one that "lberta made of "uny and noting an excellent one of old Uncle "Israel that "arolyn "orman had painted of him a number of years ago.

Supper, and much talk about "ather Becker, and the rumor that he has struck ~~xxx~~ oil on some property he owns in south Louisiana. The clerk told us that "ather "ecker charges ten cents for a sprig of palm on "alm "unday. "hat with this little ways of shaking his parishoners down, wether for a strip of palm, his movies, his cotton gin or what not, this "ather "ecker is something the "atholic "hurch might consider in t is year of our "order 1940. "unt "ammie and I read a bit from the "merican "tate "aerers and at 7:30 said goodnight.



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March 20th, - Wednesday.

Another remarkable day,--much after the manner of what the New England poet must have had in mind when he began "What is so rare as a day in June."

I awoke at three o'clock, and noticed Grandpa out side the screen door, waiting to get in. I had decided to sleep in Lyle's big four poster, and from my pillow I could see both the front and back galleries, beautifully shadowed in a shade that was doubly precious because of the gauze like shine of the moon.

I wanked on the front gallery for a little while, marveling at the summerlike quality of this lovely Louisiana night, and pondering withal upon many a point that I shall always wonder about, I reckon, but never understand. I thought, too, of Aunt Ammie's many friends, of the many friends other people I know have, and yet how curious it is that friends of one member of a given family seldom if ever find friends in the same people who are counted as friends of one particular individual member. And the stars moved along in their accustomed paths, and the shadows adjusted themselves ever so slightly to the changing position of the moon. The clock struck four, and then struck four again, I love it, for it always repeats a minute after the first striking, and so I went on. Someday someone will write a delightful essay on Lyle's pictures, I presume, and at the same time something should be done about the old grandfather's clock. I must be about 38th feet tall, has a simple wooden frame that was doubtlessly fashioned by some early inhabitant of Cane River. Inside the door is a huge colored pansy pasted there by some child in the uncertain past. The clock runs by two great weights. The face of the clock, however, is entirely different from the simple frame work of the whole piece, for it is obviously a French design, with considerable decoration in gilded metal, and the hands are unique in that each has a sun burst half way down the "needle". The bell of the clock is exquisite, and it is a pleasure to lie half awake at night just to hear the silvery note every hour and half hour. It would be interesting to know something about this lovely creation, who made it a hundred or so years ago, how it came to America and what ever became of the splendid frame that unquestionably housed it when it was new. Whether the original frame ever came to America or not is merely a matter for speculation, and what happened to it if it did travel to New France, and how someone, appreciating the beauty of the face and the tinkle of its voice, contrived to fashion a new frame to house it.

But enough of such speculation for the moment. I should add that I spent my day at my machine, with a little respite in the afternoon by making a little tour of the gardens with Aunt Ammie. We read in the evening from her Scrapbook on Isle Brevelle, from happenings in antebellum days in the households of these cultivated mulattoes who lived, and whose descendants still predominate in numbers in this strange little geographical unit running between Calrose and Bermuda. I slept again in Lyle's cabin.

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March 21st - Thursday

Up and abroad before seven. The day was glorious and held the promise of excessive heat before high noon.

I explored the American cemetery in town and was back home again before noon.

Dinner and mail with clippings from Manhattan, including the publication of Dr. Oliver's book on Natchez which I had handled for her in seeing the idea of publication of Mr. Evrese, President of Hastings House in New York some months back. It seems odd that neither Dr. Oliver nor Mr. Evrese advised me as to the release of this volume of photographs, since they must have felt I would probably be interested. But of course not writing letters is a typical Natchez weakness, and I have no doubt that Hastings House has contrived to get Spanish moss tangled in its hair from just having fussed with its publication, which would account of their neglect of letter-writing.

The afternoon was a fairly busy one with callers coming in and out, and last minute preparations for Lyle's house which will house him this evening, and Dr. Williers cabin where Kenneth and Adolph will stay.

When supper was done, Aunt Ammie and I took a little turn through the gardens, and so back to the big house where we chatted for half an hour, when I urged her to lie down for a little while before her guests began arriving. I accordingly retired to my maisonette, and worked until eight thirty when Frank arrived to tell me that every body was here. It seems that Lyle, coming up from New Orleans and the boys driving from Denton, Texas, had both driven in to the side garden at precisely the same moment.

We chatted until after nine with Aunt Ammie and then went over to Lyle's cabin for a couple of nightcaps.

Kenneth spoke of a mill in earthdayle, near Comb, Mississippi which he wanted to go look at with a view of purchasing, and Lyle told of recent guests he had had in New Orleans, including Louis Bromfield who seems to have a great weakness for tearing other contemporary writers and their writings to pieces and Edna Ferber, whom Lyle had enjoyed. I gathered from his account of these guests, however, that he felt like the "sedames" with of "sphodel" after they had seen their first movie which had been staged for them in their own home which they hadn't been away from for over 25 years. Miss Sarah said it was a very interesting experience,--this seeing of a movie. "But one which we should not care to repeat", Miss Kate had remarked.

Every one was a little tired after such a busy day, and so we all retired before twelve,--with the boys coming to my house for a final nightcap after saying goodnight to Lyle.



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March 22nd - Friday.

Up at the usual hour, with information as to the guest set up from Frank when he brought me my coffee at six. Before seven he had returned with my breakfast, so that I was ready for visitors before anyone of the guests was awake.

The boys, however, came over a little after eight, and we accordingly had their breakfast sent over here, so that we could all chat before the open fire before actually getting under way.

Kenneth spent the morning teaching Henry Hertzog how to bind newspapers, while Aunt Mammie and Rudolph went over the flower situation I stuck to my typewriter.

Dinner and a ride through Isle Brevelle,--Aunt Mammie, Lyle the boys and I. We stopped at Madame Aubert-Rocques for a time, talking of all houses which had formerly stood in this neighborhood,--all of which have disappeared save Melrose. We then continued our journey passed the Jones place which still seems one of the larger places that is in repair on the Cote Joyeuse, and so on to Bermuda to determine the boundaries of Isle Brevelle, at the far end from Melrose, and so on to point out the drive where young Rudhomme had walked with "lack --strange -- can't recall the great jurist name,-- under his arm, as recorded in the journal of the young man as Lyle included it in his Old Louisiana.

On the way home we stopped at Zelinas, and chatted with her for awhile, and met Edward at the gate as we left. Lyle stopped for a moment at the saloon at the bridgehead, and there we found Joe, to whom Aunt Mammie gave some good advice about going home.

Back to Melrose for supper, we were done before seven, when Aunt Mammie and Lyle decided to run down to Loutierville for a few minutes, while the boys and I decided to stay here. A glorious moon came up early and we walked down to the bridge and back before Lyle and Aunt Mammie had returned. About eight we all got together before the Franklin stove for an hour of good entertainment, principally by Lyle and Aunt Mammie who kept the hilarity in a high key.

At nine we said goodnight to Aunt Mammie, the boys coming over to my maisonette for half an hour after which we went over to Lyle's house where we had a good two or three houses, what with reading from the Bible, passing highballs around and around and digressing now and then to extraordinary tales of extraordinary people of whom Lyle can always speak with such amazing hilarity. There was an interlude regarding Antoine's too, and so on until about 12 when we all said good night, and fell into our respective houses, anticipating a busy day on the morrow when the boys and I hope to start for New Orleans about six in the morning.

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Frank arrived at 5:30 with coffee, and by six Kenneth and Rudolph had joined me at my maisonette, and together, we called on Aunt Mammie to say Au revoir, for it would be Sunday evening before we would see her again. She was still in bed on the sleeping porch, and it was rather grand to see how regally she greeted the youths and wished them God-speed.

The road was foggy all the way to Alexandria where we stopped for breakfast about seven, and the heavy curtain continued to hang low until we had nearly reached Baton Rouge. In crossing the Mississippi, however, the sun broke through and a typical Southern sun was to stay with us the rest of the day. From Baton Rouge we hurried along down the Air Line as far as Gonzales, and thence over to the River Road, following along the levee passed Comombe, etc., etc., until we reach Uncle Sam.

The wreckers were still laboring mightily, having already removed many a building completely from the setting,--the noble carriage house with its lovely arched doorways, the huge slave hospital, one pigeonere, one garconere and both of the little greek-templed offices. Of the big house, only the great columns still remained with a portion of one wall of the house on which men were busy with this crow-bars. By the end of this week, I suppose all of that will be gone, too, as well as the remaining garconere with its six columns front and back, the pigeonere, etc., and so what was only a couple of weeks ago the last perfect and complete plantation lay out will be no more. I am glad that Rudolph took many pictures of this dissolving glory, many of the shots being from the same position that Lyle took his photographs a couple of weeks back, so that the two sets of pictures should be doubly interesting.

I saw some youths sketching and laboring with plans that were being made of the various buildings. I spoke to them and learned they were of the Historic American Buildings Survey and that they had been successful in getting all the measurements of all the buildings before they were torn down, save for the doorways of the big house. These will shortly become available through the blue prints that will be issued by the Survey office. The youths themselves will be here at Melrose early next week to take the measurements of the buildings, including the African House, which a previous party photographed two or three weeks ago.

From Uncle Sam we ran down a few more miles along the levee as far as Jefferson College. We took some photographs of the main entrance which has always reminded me so much of the main entrance to Early-le-Doi. We also visited the buildings, and talked for a while with Father Hippie, one of those frocked individuals who always try to seem worldly by using rather too strong phrases than become the frock. After Jefferson College became a mereory so far as educational pursuit were concerned, it was taken over by the Jesuits who use it as a retreat. I had supposed that this was operated for the benefit of the clergy, but



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according to Father Whipple, the place is operated for all men who want to come away from the world for a week-end for quiet and repose. It seems no charge is made, but it is the custom of the week-end guests to drop an envelope in a basket when leaving, containing a token of their appreciation for a period of repose. It will be interesting to explore this unique establishment later.

We took some good picture of the extraordinary facade of the main building, with its forest of great white columns, and we wandered for a while beneath the great alleys of moss draped live oaks, the leaves of some having been raked up and converted into little bonfires which smoked lazily in the brilliant sunshine. We also visited the little chapel,--Gothic in style, and remarked upon the stained glass which was beautiful in color although a little busy in design. We contemplated visiting the graveyard too, but time was pressing, and so we hurried along, leaving the River road at Luther, and from LaPlace, continuing down the Air Line to New Orleans. We came into the city on Laiborne Avenue, a striking spectrum of glowing azalias, intensified by the stark and withered plumage of the great royal palms that had been cooked by the "inters devastating freeze.

Kenneth wanted to see some bankers regarding the purchase of a cotton mill, and so during the hour he was in conference with them, Adolph and I had lunch at the St. Regis restaurant on Royal Street, window shopped for a while, and wandered as far as St. Louis Cathedral on Jackson Square. The streets of the city were too warm in the bright spring sunshine, and a little too crowded with Easter-tide visitors.

We picked Kenneth up at the St. Charles, telephoned his Uncle Claude McDade in Magnolia, Miss., and so, back up Laiborne and so on the Air Line to LaPlace, whence we turned north east toward Hammond. This is an extraordinary route, passing as it does through vast forest or rather jungle lands, with canals on each side of the road, with occasional breaks in the curtains of foliage to give one a glimpse of endless canals stretching away toward the horizon. At Manchack, we passed on a bridge between Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Maurepas, and so continued northward, into the gently swelling surface of gradual altitudes, with pine trees replacing the cypress and oaks. At Amite we were nearly wrecked by an automobile that ran out unexpectedly from a side road onto the main highway. Kenneth remarked that it didn't seem upset by the close shave. It seems so strange that one should have any terror in contemplating the possibility of sudden death on the highway. Perhaps it is my belief in pre-destination that

It was dusk when we crossed the Louisiana line and it was dark when we reached Magnolia, Mississippi. We drove to Claude McDade's house, where Kenneth's uncle greeted us, in his shirt and shorts, having just stepped from his bath. With his wife, Bessie, we drove

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we drove through the dark to the Magnolia Cotton Mill,--its exact name I never did learn, where Kenneth's Uncle is superintendent. It was my first visit to a Cotton Mill, and I was appalled by the vastness of its layout. Outwardly it gave the impression of sweetness and light, with considerable plantings of shrubs and flowers which I thought I could detect in the light that shone from the windows, and a rather 1890 attempt at elegance in the steps leading from the detached office of the superintendent to the main building. Inside the mill there was an endless array of spindles, machines, gadgets of one mechanical type and another. The wife, Aunt Bessie, pointed out her section of the weaving ~~section~~ department where she labors from six until three each day. It struck me as odd that the mill's superintendent should be working, but I discovered that operation of these looms is one of the big thrills of her life.

I asked her about the ventilation which at that moment seemed rather poor. She said that one had to guard against drafts as it effected and hampered production. I wonder what the place must be like in roasting high noon of full summer. We went to the upper departments, where men were installing new machines which would begin operation on Monday. At the present time each of these machines has required six operators. From Monday on, the new machines will require only two operators. I shuddered at the fate of the 66 and two thirds operators who would be out of a job. I cannot understand a solution of the resulting increased unemployment that moves in the wake of

After leaving the mill, we expected to enjoy a belated dinner, but Mr. McDade remembered that he would need coal-oil for tomorrow's cook stove, and so we returned home to get the oil can, and then drove twenty miles into Louisiana where one may save eight cents on five gallons. We then drove back, stopping near the McDade home for a supper of fried oysters,--the best I had ever eaten,--and beer.

We spoke much of cotton mills, and various personalities, the desire of the worker to keep his job,--of Beulah May Byrd Simons, ~~xxx~~ Mr. McDade's secretary of some 35 summers who had married a mill worker who is a youth of some 20 years. I was enchanted with the name Beulah May.

Home again and eventually after more beer to bed.



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We arose a little after six. Mr. McComb had already gone to the mill to look over the progress made in the installation of the new machinery.

Mrs. McComb was busy preparing breakfast, and we boys wandered around the little garden outside, cultivating an appetite after all the oysters and beer of last night.

Breakfast done, we said goodbye to our host and hostess, and drove eight miles east toward McComb, where the Berthadale Mill that Kenneth contemplated buying is located.

The sun was glorious and as we hurried along I thought much about Mr. McComb, --lusty, kind hearted, smart driving force in the mill and of Mrs. McComb, --kind, equally uneducated and uncultured with happiness bubbling up whenever she realized that on Monday at four o'clock she would be getting up and starting with her husband to the mill where she would have all her looms running bright and early. With her husband probably making a fair salary, as superintendent of the mill, Mrs. McComb probably isn't so pressed for money as many a mill worker, and yet I was astonished at her recitation of misery if she were to once think of not being able to work every day at the mill. And I thought of the 66 and 2/3rd of the people in the mill whose jobs on the morrow would be eliminated, --with a loss not only of the money which they undoubtedly needed but also the loss of the employment.

The Berthadale factory proved to be an extensive edifice, housing ninety looms and Jacquard heads, which Kenneth is pleased to term the Stradivarius of weaving instruments. All I know about them is that they are enormous contraptions, with billions of threads swirling around in heavy steel frames above ones head, with enormous steel looms below them that reminded me of some tremendous mechanical puzzle that I should never care to unravel even if I could, which I most certainly could not. During the past fourteen years no replacements or repairs had been carried out in the mill which had done an annual business of 350,000 dollars. During the depression the Government, --F.R.D. had advanced money to the tune of one hundred thousand dollars to keep the factory going, since the Government apparently felt that it was better to advance money to the concern to keep its workers employed than to let the mill close down, throwing the workers on relief which would call for Governmental expenditures to sustain the people who were jobless. Now it seems the mill could be bought for five thousand dollars, --an extraordinary figure, since many of the machines in the plant are said to exceed that in value.

But with plenty of cotton mills in the country that are suspending production, and many o

The mill property contains some 41 acres and a flock of houses for mill workers, a boarding house, etc. Kenneth would like to own the mill, not so much with a view of making money as to do something about the status of the laborer. In fact he would like to undertake re-modeling of the houses before starting on the mill. It struck me as being akin to the cart before the horse, but I must say I admire the idealism behind the wish, even though a likelihood of success for the mill based on such an approach seems remote to me.

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Kenneth had an extended conference with Mayor Cramer of McComb, who is said to have a finger in every pie in the community. He wanted Kenneth to take over the mill and offered financial assistance I reckon that any success of the mill would re-act favorably on Cramer's local interests, and whatever the arrangements made for ownership and operation of the mill would not be without certain emoluments to the Mayor. Kenneth was enthusiastic over the possibilities of getting control of the mill. I said nothing.

I must record, too, that while Kenneth was in conference with the Mayor, Rudolph and I drove around McComb in search of a nursery in hopes of finding some hibiscus for Aunt Mammie. At the local nursery we encountered a woman whom I admired greatly. She had no hibiscus, but she did have lots of little plants with a purple ~~hibiscus~~ flower that seemed very popular in McComb, as we noticed it on many of the lawns. Rudolph told her he would like some of that but the lady refused to sell any, explaining that she was very fond of it, and while she had plenty of it in and about her nursery, she still didn't have enough to satisfy her own enthusiasm for the plant and therefore would not part with any.

About 11:30 we left McComb, driving north by back roads through the Homocheta National Park, and over roads inches deep in dust, we whirled through various little hamlets like Headville, Oldenburg, etc., until we struck the Natchez-Port Gibson cement road at Lafayette, and thence to Lorman, where we turned off to visit forgotten, crumbling Hemon, the lovely old plantation mansion that Aunt Mammie, Robina and I had found in November. There were many good natured darkies living in the house, but they were enchanted to talk with us and let us wander about the great rooms. The lovely bannister was still intact, but all the silver doorknobs had been removed. We had noted these on our last visit, and I had hoped to bring back this treasure for Aunt Mammie, but some one else had arrived at Hemon before me.

And so from Hemon we drove to Alcorn College, through the lovely forgotten winding traces, and then back to Fayette, and so on to Washington, Miss., where I had hoped to consult records in search of the Thomas Foster place. A million milling pilgrims, however, beat us to Jefferson College, and so I had to forego my search of records until another day. I pointed out the road to Foster's Mound, a house which enchanted the boys, and from there we continued to Pine Ridge Church, -- a lovely old red brick building, with lovely stained glass windows, and a charming little rectory hard by. Both buildings being set in a lovely grove of moss draped oaks in the midst of grave stones that enumerate the gentry of the neighborhood, Misslands, Chamberlains, etc.

From Pine Ridge, we continued toward Natchez, stopping for a moment to see the heart-breaking ruins of Omewood, its lovely fountain and gardens, and so on into Natchez, driving directly to Cherokee.



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We left the big sack of Giant's Beard in the garage, Aunt "ammie having sent it along to Myrtie and Charles for border decoration on their terrace. This expensive bit of masonry was washed out shortly after it was completely in December, and so the Giant's Beard is being planted to prevent a repetition, since the routes of the plant are famous in preventing erosion.

Our sweet little Myrtie received us in a beautifully quilted white dressing gown.--I'm afraid we disturbed her afternoon siesta, but was as gracious as ever and was so kind as to show us the lovely first floor of this charming old 1810 house which she and Charles are restoring with such infinite good taste. Our stay was short, however, as we wanted to head toward home, and to permit Myrtie to catch up on her nap if we hadn't entirely ruined it for that day.

But before heading for the ferry, the boys wanted to run by Goat Castle, as they had never been there. As I had been there so recently, I decided to wait for them on the gallery, looking over the unusually beautiful live oaks that grace the park surrounding the house. While loitering there, Miss Dockery came out to chat with me, and as the wind was a little chill she asked me to go inside with her so we might talk under more pleasant circumstances. I recon the smell of goats inside the house has long since become so accustomed that she never notices it any more, but must say some effort must have been made to correct the odor by the use of some strong deodorante, the success of which was scarcely more than partial, since there was still plenty of goat which seemed even more offensive when intensified by the vile deodorant itself. I was glad to note, however, that the dead goat that had graced the corner of the lovely front drawing room had been removed since my last visit a month or two back.

Miss Dockery talked animatedly with me for some time, primarily concerned with certain old pieces of furniture in the house--some of which were lovely and some of which were extremely tacky. We talked of the impending suit to oust her and Mr. Dana from the Castle, and of certain "atchez personalities which I shall refer to elsewhere. Mr. Dana joined us, and he pleased both himself and me by a rendition of one of his own compositions which was well played, I must say, and altogether entertaining, although for an original piece, it certainly seemed to hark back to certain "outher aires I have heard before. Mr. Dana also gave me quite a song and dance about certain portraits in the house, their kinship to him, although it struck me that the phrase might have switched the other way around. He was a little too stentorian in his delivery when speaking of prominent old Natchez ~~whiskers~~ with whom he might style himself "allied", although at all times his mind seemed quite lucid, even though his emphasis at time was a little over wrought.

The boys passed us in the drawing room, and I said goodbye to the Goat Castle inhabitants, going up stairs to enjoy once more with the boys the lovely proportions of the great hall and lovely bedrooms.

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so horribly furnished with such beautiful and such horrible examples of interior decorations.

It is a curious thing, but I can never be quite sure if I think the Dana-Dockery duo intentionally trick things up in that lovely old house so that it will present as wild an array as possible to harmonize with people's pre-conceived notions as to how the house of people who live with goats should look, or whether they place the furniture as it really pleases them.--that is to say as though it really suited their taste to have everything look down at the heel and tinctured with confusion. It is the same way that I am confused in regard to their part in the murder of Jenny Terril. Sub-consciously I find myself reasoning it out, and at such times I must say that I believe they are the two.--and it must have been two.--who smashed Jenny's head with an axe, carried her several hundred yards from the house to hide it in the bayou, and there drop the lighted oil lamp which obviously was carried by a second party other than the one who carried the corps. And yet, in speaking with these two people, I can never say for sure if possibly they were quite innocent of the crime and merely seemed eccentric in their concepts of the proper use of an axe just as they always seemed a little addled about the place for goats when it turned out that the goats wanted to over run the house, climb over the old rose-wood furniture and sleep on the splendid old fourposter beds.

But it is getting late, and we must be starting for "elrose, and so we came back through Natchez, crossed the ferry about five o'clock, and so scooted across from "eriday to "elrose during much talking on my part about Natchez Under The "ill which seemed to appeal much to both of the boys.

At eight thirty we were home again, and found "yle sitting with the Mistress of "elrose before the Franklin stove.

We all chatted at length regarding our varied week-ends, with Aunt "ammie telling us of certain visitors who had come up from New Orleans, and the presence of "r "och, the M. O. architect who had spent the day here taking loads of exteriors and interiors of "elrose.

We said goodnight to Aunt "ammie about nine, and so over to "yle's house for a round of highballs, much reading from the Bible and so to bed a little after mid-night.



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March 25th - Monday.

It was good to be home again, not only because I like my great fourteen window at dawning and the comfort that surrounds me, but more particularly to be at Frank's footstep on the doorstep at six o'clock, and the pleasant conversation we have while I am sipping my black Louisiana coffee and he is kindling my fire.

I had breakfast before seven, and tried to get caught up a little on my world news by way of the radio.

Lyle came over to see me for a little chat about eight, and together we called on Aunt Ammie in whose room Lyle ate his breakfast and we all joined him in coffee.

He was grand in his enthusiasm for the "fete champetre" which Aunt Ammie, he and I are planning to institute in honor of the Stanton Girls at "indy" all "anor during the coming month. There are to be cocktails of the "ink Lady variety, and there will be two different intensities, - a milder type on which Aunt Ammie will propose the toasts and a more viril one with which Lyle and I shall ply the girls. At ninety five, Miss Elizabeth ought to be perfectly gorgeous in what Lyle is pleased to refer to as our "picinque a la Watteau.

At eight thirty Lyle said good by and started for Derry, to board his train for New Orleans. Five minutes later the Texas boys joined the Madam and me for a round of conversation, with further details exchanged regarding the past week-end.

A little after nine, the boys came with me over to my maisonette where before my fireplace we all had breakfast together. It was beginning to seem that I might well fall away to a ton if this series of breakfasts could only be kept going throughout the day.

About 10:30, Kenneth went over to the bindery to show Henry about binding some "atchez" or rather "atchitoches" newspaper files running back several years, while Rudolph and I explored a lot of books and photographs on "atchez which I had been anxious to have him see.

In the afternoon, when Aunt Ammie and I were done with the mail, we all had tea in Lyle's cabin before a blazing grate, for the weather, although bright, was still a little brisk outside.

Supper, and a talk before the Franklin stove, with J. H. sitting in and asking much regarding the Berthadale Project. At eight thirty we said goodnight to Aunt Ammie, got some ice from the refrigerator in the pantry and so to Lyles for highballs and much conversation, with some reading about "atchez under the hill, and an occasional round of easter eggs between the highballs. I said goodnight at 12, and so home for a fire side and a cigarette before going to bed.

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March 26th - Tuesday.

Up at six, delighted with the general blue and gold of the sky, and dressed before the boys came over to pick me up and take me with them for a little ways on their start toward Denton.

We called on Aunt Ammie who was in a soft flowered dressing gown, her luxuriant white hair trailing in ~~axgx~~ huge pigtail down her back. She is marvelous for her balance and equilibrium, even on mornings following nights during which she has slept poorly,-- inevitably bubbling over with life and as cordial and gay as always. She kissed us all goodbye, urging the boys to be back soon, and hoping that I would have a good walk on my return.

We drove together as far as town, where we found the rain drizzling along merrily. We accordingly stopped at the hotel for breakfast, having had only coffee before leaving Melrose.

All during breakfast we talked of "atchez, exchanging ideas on certain projects that we thought merited serious consideration.

About eight thirty the boys said good by and headed toward Shreveport, while I fiddled around on Front Street, missing the nine o'clock train that would have taken me home.

I waited on the corner of the big road, this side of Cane River bridge for three hours, but everyone one was in too much of a hurry to stop on this busy day. At two o'clock the Greyhound bus came along, and I accordingly rode as far as Montrose, walking up the Melrose lane from there. I was warm by the time I reached home, for it was then after three.

Frank met me coming in by the side gate, and he accompanied me to the big house, where I wanted a cold coco-cola which I brought with me before I had dinner. Frank is a jewel, and in a twinkling my belated dinner was before me and I was forgetting the house I had been waiting in the hot sultry sun.

Before dinner or rather supper, I was distressed to learn of a flare-up between personalities in the kitchen. McKinley, it seems went to the store to announce to J. H. that he did not propose to cook food for Henry,--it being the custom for Henry to always have dinner in the kitchen of the big house instead of going home. J. H. told McKinley he was perfectly right,--for J. H. doesn't like Henry. Somehow the news got back to Aunt Ammie, and she and H. H. had a conference about the matter, during which J. H. said he would run Henry off the place by nightfall, while Aunt Ammie told her son that Melrose was her plantation and that Henry was working for her. It seems she had put McKinley straight on this point, too, telling him that contrary to McKinley's idea, the cook did not work for J. H., but on the other hand worked for the Madam and that even J. H. worked for her too.

Of course the fat was in the fire, and the up-roar was resounding. At supper, J. H., feeling contrite no doubt, asked his mother if she wouldn't like to go to town to a movie. She wouldn't. All thought of reading this evening of course had to go by the board, and so at eight we all said goodnight, but surely without much hope of sleep on



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March 27th - Wednesday.

Frank came a little before six to Lyle's cabin where I spent the night, so I had my coffee there, but galloped across the garden en chemise to my own for breakfast. The air was heavy and filled with rain particles in an obvious attempt to rain but somehow it was evident that it wouldn't.

I got out a little mail before ten o'clock when Aunt Mammie came to have coffee with me. A little after ten some callers arrived unannounced, but we couldn't linger long with them as we were due in Cloutierville at eleven. J. H. drove us down instead of sending a chauffeur. I gather he still regrets yesterday's flare-up over Henry. His affability extended so far as to make conversation by asking questions, such as inquiring of Aunt Mammie if she had read "Gone With the Wind,"--the picture we were going to Alexandria to see. I reckon Aunt Mammie almost fell off the seat at that question.

We arrived in Alexandria about 12:30, and ate at the little restaurant called Deane's, where mostest of appointment and excellent of food are the major features. Aside from us four, there were only two other people in the place,--former Governor Lesche, who is in Alexandria on trial for embezzlement, growing out of the scandals that are being unearthed and sired as were cooked up under the Huey Long administration and his successors,--of whom Lesche was one. With Lesche was his chief counsel, St. Clair, or Sinclair Adams.

From Deane's we went to the theatre where "Gone With the Wind" is playing. After buying our tickets we had to stand in line for an hour and a half,--the ladies sitting in the lobby to wait for our line to move up.

"Gone With the Wind" marked one of the shortest four hours I ever spent in a theatre. Exactly like the book, I found the picture one of the most perfect I have known so far as sustaining interest is concerned,--and I must say that is a pretty important point. As for my personal wishes, however, I found the picture like the book might have had a lot more of atmosphere and mood incorporated in it. The distinct mood element in "So Red The Rose" gave it a feeling of the atmosphere of the old South which I always wished the Mitchell book might have been impregnated with. I feel the same about the picture.

With the picture completed about six thirty, we drove back to Melrose about eight o'clock, and after a hurried glance over the mail, we said goodnight.

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March 28th - Thursday.

Up early to get caught up on correspondence, with breakfast out of the way before seven and the bird sanctuary and the pet turkeys taken care of in a jiffy.

Aunt Mammie came over for early coffee,--around nine thirty, with a view of getting on with some mail we wanted to do jointly.

Before coffee was done, however, Celeste and her Mother came over to pay us a call. Last week Celeste drove to New Orleans to pick up her mother who had been staying in Alabama several months, and they had arrived home yesterday while we were in Alexandria.

A fresh tray of coffee came, but before we were done, experts arrived with vast motorized pumps and things to spray all the gardens and trees. This called for considerable speculation as to where they should start, how the work should proceed, etc.

Before these affairs were settled, in blew the three youths of the Historic Buildings Survey. Another tray of coffee was forth coming and eventually after another half hour's chat, Celeste and her mother, the praying crew and the Survey boys got under way, but the time left for correspondence was about evaporated for one day.

Dinner was good with conversation swinging around plantations, of which the Survey had much to say, in view of the measurements they had been making of old places in Mississippi and Louisiana. It was good news to learn that they had succeeded in getting all the measurements of Uncle Sam's many plantation buildings, and had even made drawings and measurements of such details as the punka and the charming weather vane,--drawings of the latter being already in our possession. Both the Mistress and I were secretly delighted that we had communicated with the St. Louis office of the Survey immediately after our visit to Uncle Sam a couple of weeks back, acquainting that office with the demolition of Uncle Sam which was then starting, for as a result, this fine group that is here today was hurried back to Uncle Sam where they worked like beavers on the measurements, so that as a result of their labors the world henceforth will have all the particulars of this remarkable place which otherwise would have been lost forever.

At four o'clock, I ran over to Zeline's with some medicine for her which Aunt Mammie wanted her to have. We talked for three quarters of an hour, with chickens and baby chicks interrupting the conversation with their squawks as Zeline brushed them aside from time to time as they explored to energetically into the stew cooking on the hearth.

Back home for supper and a further chat with the survey boys who staid until seven. We spoke much of the Chamberlain house on the Mound some 15 miles from "atchez, and other buildings of 18th century construction. The day had been too full for Aunt Mammie to much reading, and so at eight we said good night, although I left her entertaining Celeste and her Mother, Sister, etc. I slept at Lyle's.



March 29th - Friday.

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Frank came with coffee a little before six, and shortly after ward, I went over to my maisonette for breakfast. The rain started falling shortly thereafter and continued all day.

Aunt Mammie came over for early coffee, and together we got out a couple of pieces of mail which we had delayed too long. And when eleven o'clock struck, I undertook to get caught up a little on some of my own letters which were long past due.

Dinner and the mail which was exceptionally good, and some of it relating to new publications on "atchez. This brought up something which Kenneth had told Aunt Mammie when he was here. It seems that ever so long ago, after speaking with Mrs. Moore in "atchez regarding public records of which she has constant need to consult in the Court house and elsewhere, Kenneth wrote her offering to photograph all of these for her, so that she would have all these records for herself and for her convenience whenever she wanted to consult them without chasing to the Court house. Up to the present time, Mrs. Moore has never responded. It's curious how people in "atchez are so negligent about correspondence courtesy.

After dinner I worked on mail. While in the midst of a letter Aunt Mammie called me from her upper gallery in the big house. She also called Frank and Henry. It seems that as she walked from one room to another up stairs, she noticed a three or four foot snake lying across the doorway. She circled back by another route, and called to us. Henry and Frank captured the serpent,--I reckon it was a so-called chicken snake,--black with brown spots as near as I could see. Henry performed an autopsy to determine the bulge in the snake and found a swallow which had been gulped down head first. As all the doors on the upper gallery are kept closed, and in view of the swallow's presence, it would seem as though the snake might have climbed to the roof, sought its prey in the chimney where the swallow had its nest, and in its tussle with the bird, fell down the chimney into the fireplace in the room where Aunt Mammie ran across him. A year or two back two cotton mouth moccasins were discovered crawling up the outside of a drainpipe of the big house. I certainly hope this urge for greater domesticity on the part of serpents doesn't go too far.

The express came through today,--being two packages from Mr. Babb from Dallas. They were elegant kladoscopes which he had made from the pieces of the beautifully stained glass from St. Mary's in the Woods. As a child, kladoscopes had seemed wonderful to me, and now after all these years, I find them equally so. It was so grand of Aunt Mammie to conceive the idea of having such a lovely souvenir made of the broken bits of glass from this lovely old chapel lost in the midst of a Louisiana forest.

After supper we read from the Southern Literary Messenger by Mrs. Moore,--an article on "ilgrimages. In today's mail Aunt Mammie received a notice, advising her that an index had been made of Laiborne's History of Mississippi. He is going to get one and send it to Mrs. Moore for her convenience in using the book which Aunt Mammie had bound for her this winter. At eight we said goodnight

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April 13th - Saturday.

Warmer this morning and clear, and all the promise of favor by the elements for a good walk.

From "yle's over to my house with Granpa, breakfast, and so into the big road before seven.

Green-gray frogspittle is collecting in the little coves of Cane River which looked more blue and mirror like than ever, with the black outlines of the pines seemingly painted rather than reflected on its surface.

I wandered as far as town, visiting some of the older neighborhoods to round out my concept of the place in the old days.

I dropped by Dr. McCook's, not so much to have him look at the filling he had put in some time back as to chat with him for a few moments, and at the same time rest my legs a bit before starting back home. I found that the dentist was out, so I talked for a few moments with his assistant. A nervous woman blew in as we were speaking, asking to see the Dentist at once. When advised that he was out at the moment, she wandered around the place a bit, declaring she hadn't slept a wink all night, and expressing the hope that Dr. McCook would be back shortly. She went to the door and called somewhat stringently to Janet Chrystie. I had heard Janet's name a year or two back in New Orleans but hadn't the slightest notion what she might look like. I had to exercise great restraint to curb my curiosity which urged me to get on my way, in order to get a passing glimpse at Janet, but mind triumphed over matter. Shortly the woman left, and a little later I did. I wandered along Cane River and onto the big road which turns sharply out of town. I hoped that I would see someone from home as it was getting late, and I wanted to get back before dinner. At the turn, a youth was waiting for a ride, too, and we exchanged conversation for about half an hour, each hoping that someone would come along whom we knew, as he was going in the same direction as I. Out of a clear sky he remarked that he had seen Janet Chrystie in town, but she had already gone down the road in the direction of Alexandria, driving her Aunt, so we certainly couldn't count on her. Shortly after a car came from town, and my companion remarked that Janet was driving alone. She stopped for us, and I rode in the front with her while the boy rode in the rumble seat. I racked my brains to think what I had heard about Janet, but couldn't remember, and so we chatted along gayly about little nothings, she remarking that she remembered me after a few moments chat, although, if she actually thought she did, she was certainly mistaken, as I am positive I never met her. And so we drove together as far as Montrose where I expressed my thanks and said goodbye, wondering the while how curious memory is in retaining names of people whom we have only heard about casually months or years before, and how strange our paths should have so closely verged twice in the same morning.



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April 13th - Mon.

Shortly after I had headed up the lane toward home, an old Ford of rare design came chugging along behind me. It stopped abreast, and I was invited to ride with the four darkies who were putting the poor old anitque through its paces. I climbed in,--with the two men on the front seat, and as the old contraption wheezed along we spoke of crops and the weather, and how it had thundered on the 13th of February, so it was sure to have been a frost on the 13th of April. They turned at the bridgehead near the saloon, heading up the road toward Zeline's, so they stopped to let me out, all the while knowing perfectly who I was, although I of course, hadn't the vaguest notion as to their identity.

The red truck of the Bakery came to a halt just as I descended from the Ford, and so I jumped into it, and was whizzed to the front gate, so that I arrived before Aunt Cammie had finished, although the rest had done and gone.

There was good mail, and some interesting photographs of Curriere and Ives prints which the old print shop had sent us for inspection, in accordance with a friend's suggestion, and there were some nice pieces from New York of a more personal nature.

I stuck close to my typewriter all afternoon until the supper bell rang at 5:30. Dinner was hurried a little because J. H., Dan and McKinley all wanted to get away early to rush off to town to see Gone With The Wind. And so Aunt Cammie and I lingered longer at table, having just finished our desert when Robina arrived.

We all sat down to supper for a final round, and after Robina was finished, she and I continued to sit while Aunt Cammie busied herself looking over several details about the garden that would need special attention during our absence in Natchez during the next few days. Mr. Robina, refreshed after he drive down from Shreveport, read me so mail as we sat there, especially enjoying one from Elizabeth Brandon Stanton which was really exceptional, recounting as she did, all the "thrilling" sensations she experienced in receiving the wife of the Governor of Mississippi. For Miss Elizabeth, with her 94 years, the military pageant easily transported her back to ante-bellum days, and for her, at least, the crumbling Windy Hill Manor was once more the opulent country seat of one of the great Southern families of which in reality she today expemplifies in such a fantasy of dream world as only a mind of exceptional brilliance and balminess could contrive.

After Aunt Cammie, Robina and I made a little tour of the gardens, and for a while sat before the Franklin stove, chatting together, and interrupting our own trains of thought for a little sally with Frank who came in beaming at the thought Miss Robina was at Melrose again for a little visit. We said goodnight at eight, and after a hot bath at Lyle's house, I folded up my beard.

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April 14th - Sunday.

I slept well and awoke only when Frank said Good Morning, as he stood beside my bed a little before six o'clock. He said that it was a pretty day, and I was glad to glance out the window at the beautiful calm blue which always seems to especially delicate just before sunrise.

By seven I had bathed and breakfasted with Grandpa and was waiting in the big house for Aunt Cammie and Robina who joined me in a few minutes. Frank packed us in the car, and by a quarter past seven we were headed down the Montrose road.

We stopped in town to mail some letters and then headed north across Red River at Grand Score, and then straight east through Winfield and the long stretches of pine woods throught which the road spreads for miles without sight of habitation. Aunt Cammie dozed a bit before we reached Jena where we stopped for a cup of coffee. I reckon it was between nine and ten at Jena and still rather early for Sunday. Anyhow, I remember a man on the street stopping dead in his tracks as Aunt Cammie, half awake, announced as she descended from the car: "I'm still drunk",--an amusing statement for one who never touches a drop, but withal quite devastating to the pedestrian.

Coffee, and on our way again, reaching the Natchez Ferry before e even, and so across the Mississippi to the otherside which for me will always be the most fascinating locality in the world.

Up Silver Street, through the heart of old Natchez-Under-The Hill which I should much love to control at this moment, and so on to Charles and Myrties to chat with them for a moment and to have Aunt Cammie and Robina seem the marvelous restoration work they have done for their lovely "Cherokee". Both Myrtie and Charles were sweet as ever, and I believe that Robina liked the place as much as I.

We lunched at Burton's and then ran out to the little graveyard opposite Unleith, where Aunt Cammie lingered while Robina and I called on the mulatto, Sally Johnson to see if she still had the Natchez and New Orleans newspaper files of the 1830's which we should so enjoy having at Melrose.

Picking up Aunt Cammie, who had found the graveyard closed but who had wandered about the neighborhood while we were gone, we headed out Pine street and were soon in the traces. We paused once more to catch a glimpse of the ruins of Homewood, and a little further along, we drove in at its "sister" house, lovely Landsdown, which is hidden a mile or so back from the main trace. We then continued along the mail trace by the white fences of various plantations, stopping only at Pine Ridge Presbyterian Church where the Pine Ridge, Church Hill and Washington roads converge.



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April 14th - con . page 2.

This lovely little red brick church, with its adjacent little session house, sits on the top of a little knoll and is surrounded by lovely moss draped oaks. We opened the little gate before the yard, and strolled in, glancing to our left where the tombstones of the Chamberlains are buried within a little wrought-iron enclosure. We stepped into the little church, with its lovely oval-top windows and its nice old wooden pews, with its old, old stove near the upper left hand side, --which in winter must have always roasted those in the adjoining pews while the worshipers in the more remote seats must have frozen. We glanced through the windows of the little session house, noting the lovely windows and the handsome fireplace at the far end. We walked down the ~~knoll~~ knoll at the rear of the church, reading some of the old tombstones of distinguished Pine Ridge residents of ante-bellum days. Surely this Pine Ridge cemetery ranks with the Episcopal one in St. Francisville for beauty, and unlike the latter, this one has the virtue of being more off the beaten path.

Returning to the car, we took the middle forks of the road, and drove a mile or two through lovely traces to Mary's home. This is Edgewood, and Mary and her husband, S. N. Lambdin live here with their two sons, Jeff, some 13 summers and Aldo, possibly 10.

We turn in from the trace road to the plantation road at a little group of buildings, --cabins, I reckon, and turning back in a parallell --funny, I know how to spell that word, too, even though I do put the "l"s in the wrong position, and following along a winding path, one passes little artificial lakes, that are bordered by huge old magnolias, oaks, etc.

Edgewood is a lovely place, looking quite 1850 in its outward appearance yet quite unostentation within in, yet extremely elegant in its simplicity of line, and turly impressing, yet cordial and friendly in the air of refinement it breathes through its beautiful furniture, draperies, portraits, etc., etc.

Mary met us at the car and saw to having our luggage whisked away. We sat for a little while and chatted with her and her husband in the front drawing room, while she determined what we wanted to do this lovely afternoon. We wanted to see the burial ground of Thomas Foster who for decades had owned the slave-prince ofallon.

Mary was equal to this request, for her father, Mr. Henderson, had long owned Greenwood plantation, and this was the Foster place, --adjoining the John Foster place, know as Foster's mound.

And so we said au revoir to Mr. Lambdin, and with Mary as our guide, we headed back to Pine Ridge Church and turned down the Washington Road. It's traces are marvelous, so deep out, like great avenues of chocolate earth, with huge great trees growing above on either side and forming a canopy high above.

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We turned just at Foster's Mound, having already passed several old plantations, such a Languedocque, Wilderness and others belonging to the Lambdins, and so headed West until we came to Greenwood Plantation. There we turned in, and Mary pointed out the graves of Thomas Foster who had died in 1829 and Cassandra Foster Speed, his daughter. We also wandered about the former garden of Greenwood, noting the cisterns, out buildings and emplacements of the former house. We also copied and photographed the tombstones.

We then drove into town, and called on Mary's aunts, one of whose name is Ayres, Mrs. Ayres, gather, since I understand she is Mr. Henderson's sister. They live at Belmont, a fine old house, with lovely old oil paintings and portraits, with with the interior badly done over in the 1870's I imagine, since the fire places aren't good, --Victorian bade tase in tiles, and curious Corinthian columns, --lovely in themselves, but quite out of place as supports for the huge lower floor of this lovely old place whose partitions on this first floor were removed, for some unknown reason to make the entire floor one enormous room, with these ghostly columns starting up at intervals, and doubly ghostly against the unfortunate deep brown, --almost black woodwork throughout the entire first floor. Mary says the upper floor is still lovely, thank heavens, for Victorian enthusiasm didn't reach that high when the place was being done over in post-bellum days.

At Belmont we were cordially received and shown a Dr. MacCreery's account book, dating from 1805. It is a remarkable record of distinguished persons ofatchez of that era. It would appear that the worthy Dr. treated everyone including the Spanish governors of an earlier date, Winthropargent, the first American Territorial governor and builder of Gloucester. In fact, almost anyone of prominence of earlyatchez was in the good Dr.'s book and frequently the medecine perscribed as well as an account of the charges and date of payments of accounts. Aunt Ammie wants Kenneth to micro-film this volume for it really is of great interest from several viewpoints, and most particular to us who are so interested in the live and times of theatchez gentry of the first half of the 19th century.

From Belmont, we returned to Pine Ridge, driving on beyond Edgewood, and two miles up and up an ascending road through beautiful, cool traces until we reached Mistletoe Plantation, which Mary owns. It formerly or rather originally was part of the Island tract, the old man having built Mount Airwell for his home, and Peter, his son, having built Mistletoe, almost across the way, --but well separated from each other by the distance of each from the main road, and so Mistletoe was Peters, until he



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until Peter fell ill with typhoid fever and fell in the well and was drowned. It seems that the treatment for typhoid in those

days consisted primarily of denying the victim any food or water. Peter was dying for lack of water, and so when the family was at dinner, Peter staggered out of his room, dragged himself to the well and fell in.

It was approaching sundown as we turned in toward Mistletoe from the main road and drove up the slowly mounting lane toward the manor house. It isn't a large place, but infinitely charming for a house built in this region in the first decade of the 1800's. There is a gallery, one story up from the ground, running across the entire front of the house. The entrance is unique with side lights on either side of the door and a fan light that opens only above the door and does not extend to the side lights. The entrance hall is wide, running straight through the house, and at the left one notices a little staircase, with steps that are unusually narrow. Over each of the doors to the right and left just inside the hall from the front door are transom lights that are fine, and each of these doors lead to finely proportioned rooms with enormous windows and a fire place in each. It is curious that the both fireplaces are almost up to the partition at the end of the room away from the gallery. Behind each of these large rooms is a small room with no fireplace.

There is a large gallery at the back, while on the right of the house is a grand wing, ample and nobly proportioned, with quantities of windows and fireplace. This, Mary says, was the dining room.

On the second floor is an enormous attic which with a dormer or two could be made into a lovely little apartment not unlike mine in Manhattan.

The house has been tortured by people living in it who never comprehended its worth. Fortunately, Mistletoe now belongs to Mary and she has saved it from destruction, and by degrees will bring it back into its former status of a distinguished home. She had hoped to get it on the pilgrimage, with a view of using the money thus acquired to further repairs, but this hope has been denied her, and so she will undertake it by some other means.

It was almost dark when we retraced our steps to Agewood, where we found Mr. Lambdin and the boys awaiting our return. We dined in the lovely dining room, beautifully appointed, with the main items for supper embracing a big Virginia ham, a luscious jelly-tomatojuice salade, hot biscuits, puddings, etc. Later we chatted in the drawing room, read old documents, original Spanish grants, etc., and gossiped about Natchez personalities of the present in spite of Aunt Cammie's cudgel wielding for the absent. At 10:30 we said goodnight.

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April 15th - Monday.

I slept well but not soundly in the great four poster in the front bedroom of Agewood. It was pleasant to awaken from time to time, listening between naps to the sounds of the various night birds and the honking of the Canadian geese which are domesticated on the little artificial lakes in the gardens of Agewood. For years Mary's father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Anderson have raised these lovely birds. At one time their natural impulse toward spring and autumn migrations may them rather transitory members of the Agewood estate, but the clipping of wings brought persuasion to linger at Agewood and now they seem quite domesticated and satisfied citizens of this lovely place.

I awoke at five o'clock, wondered if Frank was preparing coffee to serve at Elrose and wished I might see him step in my bedroom at Agewood with an early morning cup. I smoked a cigarette, listened to the waking feathered world, and then fell back asleep.

About seven I awoke when I heard a soft voice say good morning. There stood a black servant in a spotless white jacket, bearing a breakfast tray. He placed it on the ample table beside me, walked around to the far side of the great bed, and picking up a fat pillow, returned to my side and placed it, as Sam Brown would say "plum" on my stomach. On it he balanced the tray of coffee, scrambled eggs, fruits and delicious sausage.

We chatted for a few minutes as I fixed up the sugar and cream in my coffee, and then he silently withdrew, returning after I had finished my cigarette, to ask if he might build me a fire. I declined with thanks, as the weather was perfect,--all blue sky and cool delightful atmosphere and temperature.

A few minutes he returned to say that my bath was ready, and I accordingly leaped through a shower and a shave, and a few minutes later was down on the front gallery, starting out to make a little tour of the artificial lakes, to observe the nesting geese on its banks and the elegantly unostentatious iris that filled the air along the margins of the lakes with a curious smell of cinnamon and honey.

Back to the house, I found Mary and Aunt Fannie and Hobina ready for a little tour.

We drove first to the Pine Ridge Church to take some photographs of it for the Macgruder diary, and then turned north and east toward Mont Nepeuse. Mr. Shields was awaiting us at this charming old Missian plantation house, and he was good to show us many of his family documents, including the Macgruder family tree, where we found Aunt Livian Dunbar and Elizabeth Lloyd Macgruder whose diary we have so much enjoyed. He also pointed out the old desk that Judge Shields had used at the time he presided over the trial of Aaron Burr at Washington, Miss, and some fine old oil portraits of his ancestors, beautifully designed china and other precious pieces of furniture.

From Mount Nepeuse drive we remarked upon the beauty of the



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fine avenue of live oaks, garlanded with Spanish moss. This was the famous avenue that one of the "hields" had planted in anticipation of opening it for the first time to receive his friend Henry Clay when the latter was elected President. As Mr. Clay never did receive the electoral votes necessary to elevate him to the Presidency, Mr. "hields" never did open this avenue, and so it stands today as a mute symbol of respect which the owner never had an opportunity to show.

We continued along the "fine" "idge" "hurch" "ill traces,--unbelievably beautiful in the tender green of the leaves arching from the great trees that line this narrow lovely old road, cut deep in the luscious brown loamy soil. A few miles beyond Mount "epose, we turned off the main trace onto a lovely winding plantation road, and ~~the~~ followed it along its winding course, over bayous and bridges to "eachland, another of the original "issla plantation units. "e had not announced our coming, although we had learned that Miss Archer who lives there was not at home, and so we paused only long enough to take photographs. It is a charming early plantation house with double gallery and enchanting wings. An absence of paint made the whole house seem as though it were ~~xxxxx~~ designed to give the natural wood its full value.

"e retraced our steps to the main trace, continuing along until we reached the "hurch "ill intersection of the "ine "idge and "ashington road. "igh up above the intersection, and sticking out like a piece of pie, rises the famous old "iscopal "hurch which gave this distinguished plantation region its name. It was here that Aunt "livia, "izabeth "agruder and so many others in the "iary worshipped. "ross the road and on a lower level, so the typical southern country store. I went in to see if I could buy a pencil and some coco-cola. The sun was so bright outside and the shadows so deep inside that for a moment I had difficulty in discovering any proprietor of the place. Finally, half way back, I located a middle aged, stalwart looking man, rather carelessly dressed, seated before a bridge table. "e was playing solitaire. I asked him if he was beating. "e said the cards were against him., as he continued to turn the cards over one by one. I asked him if I could purchase a pencil. "e pointed over his shoulder with his thumb, indicating that someone else might sell me one if there were any in this curiously disarrayed establishment. In a pre-occupied voice, he pointed out, however, that the man wouldn't be able to help me for a little while, as he was busy making up the mail. I smiled to myself as I thought of the herculean task that must be for a post office in such a remote region.

I risked distracting the solitary player again by asking if there was any "oco-cola in the place for sale, thinking I might be able to locate that item with more ease than searching for a pencil in this rural hodge-podge "ga general store. "gain the player made no response by word of mouth, but still turning over the cards, deftly pointed to the front of the place without losing a moment in the operation of his game. I stepped gingerly over the sprawling horses colars, tin pails and what not, and near the front door discovered the case of metal, containing a small cake of ice floating

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floating in a sea of brackish water. "ome bottles were floating about in the water, and I began fishing for "oco-cola. None, however, floated on top, and so I rolled up my sleeves and dived into the uncertain depths of the tank. My efforts brought forth only strange strawberry colored brews and so I gave up in despair.

I returned to the car, and explained to the ladies how the tie up in ~~xxxxx~~ merchandising in the store had temporarily brought all thought of commerce to a complete standstill, and so we decided to concern rate on the "hurch. Aunt "ammie took some photographs from the road level, facing the camera up the long flight of cement steps that lead straight up the hill from the "point of the pie" to the "hurch at the top of the knoll. "e mounted these steps, and stepped into the lovely sturcture. Beautifully stained glass windos at the far end, above the pulpit cast a curious arabesque color scheme over the entire interior. This delicious structure is not the original structure but a newer one built on the emplacement of the earlier one. "s this one was erected in 1857, however, and as Aunt "livia didn't die until 1850, she obviously worshiped here with "lizabether "Gruder, the "hields, the "rchers, "omemans, etc. "ere was a curious odor within the church, which Aunt "ammie thought was that of bats. "ater we learned that during the past "inter bats had been in the church and had frozen. The place was fumigated but last week, but it would seem as though the job isn't quite in finished as yet.

"obina, in the mean time had made an assault upon the general store; discovered that the soli aire player was still consumed with his game, but the store keeper and postmaster much have concluded his struggle with the mail, for she came out bravely with two pencils. "unt "ammie and I sauntered through the graveyard that lies to the left and rear of the church., noting many a familiar nameon stones that were erected both before and after the "ar.

"eluctantly we returned to the car, for we could glandly have spent hours in delving into history by this most fascinating avenue of tombstones. "e drove down the "ashington road, possibly a few hundred yards, and there on our right we stopped at the old "hields home where Miss "ulu "hields now resides. "t is know as Oak Grove, and before it is a fine avenue of oaks and cedars draped with endless tatters of Spanish moss.

"ak "ovne has a double gallery running across the front of the main house. "o the right there is a most attractive wing, --the one on the left having been taken down. To the left, but ~~xxx~~ detached from the house itself is the old school house. It is tottering. "ow I wish it might be saved.

Miss "ulu responded at our knock. She didn't appear but asked us to come in at make ourselves comfortable in the drawing room at the left. We found it a beautifully proportioned place, with lovely plaster medallion in the ceiling, and similiar work, handsomely executed at the cornices. The room contained so handsome old antique pieces of furniture, a splendid marble mantle of dark green, and at least half a dozen fine portraits.



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Miss Lulu joined us shortly, a kindly little woman, with bright blue eyes and white hair, with possibly 70 summers sitting on her brow. I gather that she is some kin of Mary's for she seemed to know all about Mr. E. and the boys, although I think none of the Lambdins had ever been in the house before. I think poor Miss Lulu was a little puzzled as to why we all should have expressed interest in the Macgruder diary. She said she couldn't imagine anyone ~~xxxxxxx~~ caring about the doings of people, long dead, who were not of their own family. I imagine the same thought has flitted through the minds of countless youngsters who have had history cramed unwillingly down their throats. But Miss Lulu was kindly, even though she must have thought us extremely odd. Fortunately, however, Bobina spoke to her about the Davis in Shreveport who are Bobina's old friends and who are also kin, I believe to Miss Lulu. In the end, I believe, Miss Lulu, thanks to Bobina's good work, may have thought we were maniacs, even though I imagine she somehow felt we must have been a little cracked. Here at Oak Grove, poor little Miss Lulu lives all by herself. The place takes money to be kept up, I imagine, and somehow I feel that Miss Lulu hasn't a great deal, although the house is beautifully furnished with lovely old pieces that have come down to her, I suppose, from those opulent times when the Shields and Church Hill produced fortunes each year in cotton that brought such tremendous returns in the good old days before the war.

And so we said good bye to Miss Lulu, continuing down the Washington road. Following Mr. Shields' accurate description, we noted two culverts that we passed, and then a long steady rise, toward the summit of which to the left, we noted an extensive pecan orchard. In the midst of this, where we could determine old cisterns and a cabin built upon brick ruins, had stood Aronda, the plantation home of Aunt Olivia Dunbar. This was the place where Elizabeth had lived so long with her Uncle and Aunt, and where after the former's death, she and Aunt Olivia had lived on together, expanding their gardens, operating the 1000 acre plantation and entertaining lavishly in a homely way the Archers, Shields, Johnstones, Macgruders, etc., etc., who went to make up the Church Hill gentry in those happy days. I certainly want to go back to Aronda and wander about its former gardens and get the "feel" of the place which from all accounts must have been such an admirably conducted home and plantation.

From Aronda driveway, we continued on up the hill, passed where Mr. Ireland, the overseer, must have lived, and so maintained a rather brisk speed until we came to the gate of Mount Ararat. I should say in parenthesis, that between Miss Lulu's and Aronda, we had passed the Cedars, a large plantation house on the right. But now we are at the gateway to Mount Ararat, and it is 11:30. We opened the gate and drove in, winding up and down hill and curving in and out for several miles, I should imagine. At last we came upon two neat little houses of modern construction, built on the foundations of the vainish manor house of Mount Ararat. Here we called on Mr.

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we called on Mr. Macgruder Drake and his sister, Miss Cooper. Mary told us that Macgruder Drake, kin to all the old Drakes and Macgruders of this region, had formerly lived for a time in Memphis where he had cleaned up on some stock deal, had returned to Church Hill region and was now enjoying himself on his thousand acres which includes parts of the former Mount Ararat and Aronda plantations. What I liked best about him was that he provided the money for the restoration of the sweet little brick Methodist church at Washington, which stands in front of the B. B. B. Ailes house.

Mr. Drake seems to be a timid little man, but withal quite a distinguished gentleman. He was just in from overseeing some of his prized blooded cattle. We spoke of the Macgruder diary, and like Miss Lulu, Mr. Drake spoke of it as having been in three parts,--that of it which was rescued from the fire at Oakley a few years back. He didn't know where all three parts might not be, although suggested that someone whom Mary ~~xxxx~~ knew in "Atchez" as might having it at present. He also was kind to show us his copy of the B. B. B. Ailes diary, all of the original of which is now at Duke University in North Carolina, save for four volumes of it which is in Oxford, Miss., at the University there. I do hope we can borrow a copy of this from Mrs. Charles Brandon.

Mr. Drake spoke of other old places in this region referring especially to the home of David Hunt,--I thought he called it Longwood, which is near Church Hill. He promised to take me there when I come back with Mary. His should be a fine place, I should imagine.

It was now nearly twelve, and feeling that we were imposing a little on the Drakes,--although they did ask us for dinner, we said goodby and returned to the main Washington road, heading east.

The road continues in a winding, rising and falling fashion along the tops of the ridges that stretch from the Church Hill neighborhood for miles toward the East, and on the right and left hand side of his excellent dirt road, we noticed many fine old plantation houses in various states of repair. We stopped for a moment at Oakland, which the Lambdins sold only a few months back. In ante-bellum days it had belonged to the Archers who appeared so frequently in the Macgruder Diary. It sets on a hillock, well back from the road, reached by a little lane of several hundred yards. It is a large house, not unlike Peachland, with a double gallery running clear across the front of the main building, and supports a half story above the second. Wings of considerable proportions flank the building on the right and left side. The lovely garden or park which formerly graced the front of the house has been pretty well pillaged by cows. Mrs. Lambdin says that the most extensive garden formerly stretched back from the rear gallery of the house. He didn't go in, as Mary seemed in a hurry, although I much wanted to see the lovely stair rail and the general lay-out of this lovely old place. I do hope it may somehow be saved from dis-intergration.

A little further along the dirt road and we struck the cement road No. 61, leading into Washington. A couple of miles or so to the East of the former Mississippi capital, we could see the roof of Brandon Hall away among the trees, and we accordingly turned back on



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we turned in at a plantation road, and drove for possibly a mile through rolling country, seemingly partly in cultivation. Finally the road parted to left and right. I take it the buildings down the left road were those of the overseer's house, while we followed the right turn, driving for several hundred years until we reached Brandon Hall,--a huge manor house built in the 1850's by Gerard Brandon, the third. His grandfathers old manor house, Selma, we did not see, although it cannot be far away.

Brandon Hall seems to be in excellent repair, with galleries running around three sides of it, the latter extremely wide, and supported by Corinthian columns, and balustraded by fine wrought iron in a lyre pattern. The main hall,--larger than the ordinary ballroom, runs straight through the house, and at the far end one notices a staircase that slopes back toward the front of the house. There are series of rooms to the right and left of this great hall,--tremendously high cielined rooms, with elegant woodwork and delicate plaster work about the cornices. Mary said that the owners of Brandon Hall, which is occupied only by servants, are trying to sell the place to the Illinois Central Railroad as a kind of retreat for some of its organizations. To the rear of the house we noticed some charming out-buildings, and one in particular struck me as being unusually charming. It was the well-house, which in reality was not so much a house as a covered portico, round, and a circular roof supported by a dozen columns, reminding me of a similar building in stone at the entrance of Arc Monceau in Paris and a little of the little summer house in Arlington Cemetery.

In visiting so many places, during this morning's drive, I believe I have neglected to include one which we visited after calling on Macgruder Drake. It was Oakley Plantation, where the Macgruder diary was rescued at the time the house burned a few years ago. Oakley isn't many miles from Rounda, and I believe was a shields house. It sat well back from the road on a knoll. We drove in and asked some darikies where the cemetery might be. They pointed it out to us, and down a little gulley we traveled on foot, ~~not~~ mounting a steep incline on the far side. This charming little burial ground is fast going toward obliteration. It is still fenced in by its original brick wall, but vandals have already played havoc with many of its tombstones, and it would seem as though grave diggers might have plundered some of the last resting places of these distinguished plantation people. Many of the elegant tombstones have been pushed over, and many of them have been carted away to be used as supports for cabin foundations, I suppose, for stepping stones, etc. We found Aunt Olivia's grave, and took pictures of it, and we noted two graves of different Robert Unbars, but we were uncertain if either of them were Aunt Olivia's husband.

From Oakley, we headed toward Edgewood, cutting north from the main road. We passed Mount Irwell, and a nice looking house, formerly belonging to the Irelands,--the name of the place being unknown to Mary who said colored people now live there, and so we drove along by Littleton, Vernon,--formerly a large place which was burned a year or so back, and thence to Edgewood. By now it was after tea time, but the servant had a delicious luncheon awaiting us. We were all a little wearied by our strenuous tour of the morning, so that luncheon tasted doubly appetizing. After luncheon, I had thought of speaking

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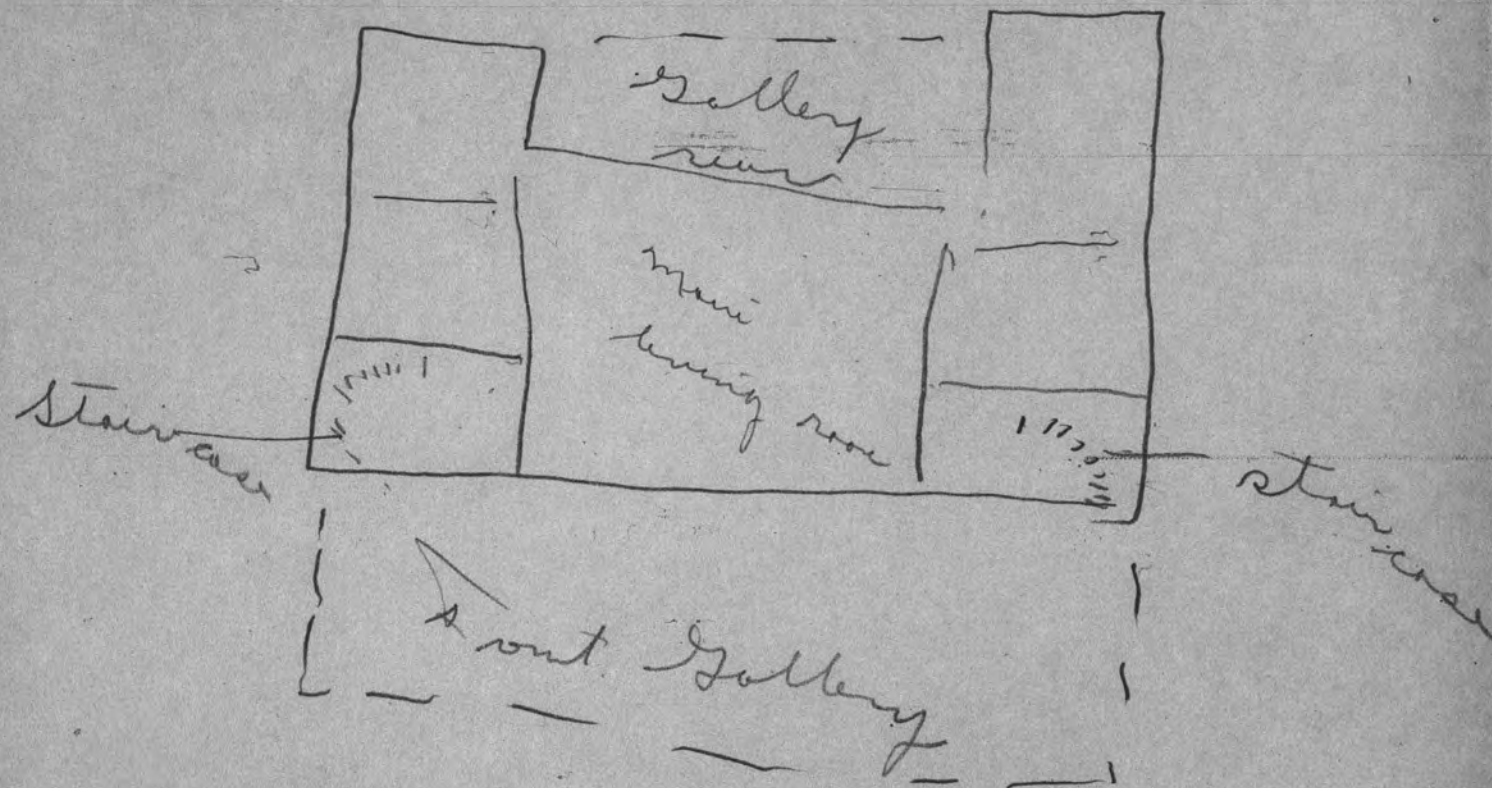
speaking for a moment with Mr. Anderson, but on second thought I realized that such an hour would probably be rather unsatisfactory for conversation with an invalid, and so I relinquished the idea, although I should have welcomed the opportunity to further explore along certain lines we had covered last night when I dropped in to speak with him just before supper. Mr. Anderson inherited Greenwood plantation from his father, I believe. He told me that when still quite young, he had been advised by his father to take down the old home of Thomas Foster. He had started to do so, and then was called away on business, and upon his return, it occurred to him that he was making a mistake in demolishing this historic old place but as the demolition had so far progressed, he felt it was too late to turn back and so he let the tearing-down proceed. He told me the house was unusual in several respects and he thought there might have been many old papers of family interest in the house when he was having it taken down, for workmen found various items in the attic and in secret partitions between the walls, containing many old documents, some of which, as he recalled, dated back as far as 1777, seventeen hundred and six. Surely the house was not built at that time, but the papers might have dealt with important family matters as far back as that. In any event, Mr. Anderson in those days wasn't interested in old papers, and so all of these he burned, without even glancing over their contents. As Aunt Mammie once said to Dr. Cruggs about the Harriet Beecher Stowe originals of Uncle Tom's Cabin: "Not only are you not literary, you are lacking in common sense". But anyhow, the papers went up in smoke, and of course no one will ever know what they contained, although some of them must have been considered valuable to the Fosters since they were concealed within the wainscoting. Mr. Anderson said the house faced the east. A gallery ran full across the front of the house. To the left of the house were old out-buildings, while to the right were large cisterns, a well house, etc. From the front of the house the plantation road ran parallel to the gallery toward the right, going down a gently sloping hill to T. Catherine's Creek where a ford at that point took one to the former settlement of Morgantown, where one might turn to the left to reach Washington or to the right to reach Stchez. I reckon the Prince of Gallon when a slave must have traversed both of these roads very often. I should add, possibly as a record, that the Greenwood Plantation of Thomas Foster adjoined the Foster's Mound Plantation, and I imagine the J. Foster graveyard on Catherine's Creek must be quite near the ford across the creek to the T. Foster Plantation house. But getting back to the Foster house: The dominating room ran through the center of the house,--one of the largest rooms Mr. Anderson could remember ever having seen. It ran from the front gallery to the rear. Also opening from the front gallery were doors to the right and left of the one leading into the center room, and these two entrances opened into small rooms at the extreme ends of the house, and both of these two rooms contained staircases that ran up to the second floor. Behind these two end or corner rooms, were two other rooms, and behind that pair, two other rooms completed the down stairs lay out, these latter rooms extending out into a U shape, with the back gallery of the great room connecting these two projecting wings. Mr. Anderson said he could remember that the fireplace in the



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Mr. Hnederson said that the fireplace was the largest he had ever seen,--that is the one in this center room, but he could not remember about the fireplaces in the other rooms. He said the upper story was laid out precisely like the lower floor. I reckon the whole general floor plan,--both upper and lower, was something like this:



And so, in anticipating the opportunity to see Mr. Henderson, I didn't refer to the fact that I should like to say goodbye, but joined the ladies in the front drawing room where we talked for a little while, and then said goodbye to Mary and drove off toward the Pine Ridge Road and so back to Atchez.

It was after three when we reached town, and we halted only long enough to call Mrs. Hull in Woodville to let her know we would stop with her tonight. We then took to open country, leaving town via Unleith, Onwood and Clouscester, and continuing along the lower Woodville road out of Atchez as far as Saragossa, where we drove in through the curious twisting, narrow, deep cut traces, winding around and about until we came to that extraordinary plantation house. I suppose it is as old a plantation as any in the Atchez region, no one knowing from what dim past it comes. Certainly it was once the home of Spanish governors, and later it was here that "inthop" Argent, the 1st Territorial Governor came to woo and win his wife before he built Glover Place. I pointed out the curious amphitetre that slopes away from the old old house. There still remain an iron flower pot or two in the original implament, but I couldn't find any of the huge pots of iron that used to dominate its terraces in the old days, although these had still be there when I visited the place a couple of years ago.

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We wandered down the sunken road that runs out of the far end of the former terraced gardens, and strolled slowly along until we came to a spot in the old sunken avenue where the land drops off into a sheer drop of hundreds of feet below where a vast forest of tree tops spread out like a great green ocean of undulating little billows. We had parked the car before the old house, and had noticed another not far from ours, although the people in the first car must have been inside the house when we started strolling down the old sunken path. As we returned toward the house, the first car drove out as we approached, and from the house came the Mr. Mith, or whatever his name is, who lives at Saragasso. He said that two ladies had just left, after a short visit that afternoon. One of the ladies was some Mrs. Brown, if I remember correctly from Wisconsin of Minnesota, and the other lady was Mrs. Edith "Yatt" Moore of Atchez. At this point I should insert a rather curious incident concerning the seemingly same make up of Mr. Mith. I remember when I visited the place a year and a half ago, Mr. Mith had sunk pretty low in the direction of the flowing bowl, and it was said that he was inclined to be a little off while under the influence of liquor which was the major part of each month. I recall that on that earlier afternoon, he was leaping around behind trees, peering at us from time to time, but never getting very close to us, even when we examined the dilapidation of his house. Today Mr. Mith seemed quite sober but the first thing he told us was that he hated chickens and that he would go miles to kill them. He also told us of a colored boy he had who was very adept at catching rattlesnakes with a ~~pronged stick~~ forked stick, and that the colored boy would adroitly hold the squirming snake's head to the ground with the stick, and as its body coiled up around the stick, he would slit it open and extract its heart, swallowing the same with a hurried gulp, and so have the pleasure of feeling that rattlesnake's heart beat for the next two days within his own insides. A curious tale, I thought, and scarcely appropriate for the visitors with whom he was speaking.

I did what I could to steer him away from his curious anecdotes, and we spoke of the cemetery over on the ridge to the right of the house behind the great draped live oaks. He invited us to go over and look at it, but we felt that we had best be on our way, and we hoped that later we might drop by at a time of day when we weren't snatched between such a busy morning and a shortening afternoon.

And so we drove away from strange old Saragossa, the most weird of all the so-called "lost" plantations, and so back onto the ~~lower Woodville road~~ the lower Woodville road. Of all the roads in the world, these wonderful old traces stretching from Atchez to Francisville Louisiana to way above Port Gibson in Mississippi are the most beautiful of all, and here on this lovely April afternoon, this particular trace seemed unusually peaceful and beautiful. It was quiet, for I believe in the 40 miles not a car passed us, and it is redolent with historic shades that have passed this way from French, Spanish, English American, "lanter", Confederate and postbellum travelers who have passed up and down this road. At many places the traces reach high above the top of the car, and from that high point, the trunk of trees begin ascending to form a natural trellis of green tracery high above one's head while over the sides of the chocolate colored side walls of these roads cascade great torrents of Chidisa roses, like snow-white sprays of beauty, draped in the last perfection of



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nature as a kind of solace for man from a wise and kindly spirit that gave man an Eden which so often man seems to have forgot.

After seeing so many plantation in one day, we rather inclined to let these famous old places slip by without more than remarking at their presence, hidden away at the end of delicious deep shadowed private roads. We passed at least one cemetery, too, but what with the failing light we didn't even slow down. We passed by the entrance to Laurel Hill Plantation, at present the home of Mr. and Mrs. Pierce Butler, where their daughter, Virginia Dixon, had invited Christian and me a year or so back. This is the famous plantation, too, which Louise Butler used as the model for the last word in Louisiana Plantations in her article that appeared in the Louisiana State Historical Society's Journal.

The present entrance to Laurel Hill is rather striking,--two white brick posts, standing out sharply at a turn in the old foliage draped "oodville" road traces. The plantation road beyond these posts winds for a couple of miles through woodland, leads through a stream that must be forded, and eventually leads to the Manor itself with its several out buildings. Some of Miss Louise's people used to live here in ante-bellum days. There was a name was Mercer. There was the original house, square with a patio in the center, and around this old original building the great house had been built. This dominated the whole surrounding layout of buildings which included the over-seers house, the parson's house, the exquisite little marble gothic chapel, the church, the Mr. S. house, the offices, the quarters, etc., etc. As we passed by Laurel Hill in the failing light, it seemed more fabulous than ever, people as was this road with shades of vast assemblies of Spanish ones and faded gentry.

A little further along we came to a bridge that had been washed out, and so we retraced our steps for a way, turning to the right, and shortly reaching the main new concrete highway that runs from Iberville straight into "oodville.

We stopped at Mr. Sullivan's for a little while then drove through the town, stopping at an antique shop near the main square, and then dining after which we walked for a bit around the courthouse in the great square, and so back to Mr. Sullivan's to sleep.

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We were up at seven and having breakfast and in the big road again before eight. The enchantment over yesterday's excursion through the lower "oodville road led us toward further exploration on the same road, but this time below woodville down toward St. Francisville. We accordingly headed west from the center of town, and drove toward old Port Adams, keeping to the left, so that we wouldn't run way over to the Mississippi. The same luxuriance of foliage and beauty of hickory roses was evident on either side of the road and over head. Beautiful magnolias appeared in out of the way and unexpected places, as did the cucumber trees which seem to do so well in this region although they will not grow at "elrose.

Albina and Aunt Sammie both kidded me about my enthusiasm for these marvelous traces, but from their own gasps at the striking quality of these forgotten roads made me feel that they too were liking the journey a little bit.

I suppose we drove for about twenty miles or more along these ever changing over the same sunken roads, until we finally reached a black-top road. This marked the end of our trek in this southerly direction and so after a few minutes halt we turned about and returned to woodville over the same road. When the road would come out on a level stretch, we would note little islands of green, more concentrated than the surrounding foliage, and this we knew indicated the presence of an old plantation house. Sometimes we could catch a glimpse of them or of their roofs, but at none of these did we stop, as we felt that we should catch the Natchez ferry by three o'clock that afternoon.

Back in "oodville, we took a cup of coffee, and then headed north on what we took to be the upper "oodville road, heading toward Natchez. This road may have been one of the upper "oodville roads, but it was one I had never been over before. But it was beautiful and the weather was fine, so nobody cared where the road was leading us, since it seemed to be heading in the general Natchez direction. We drove for a couple of hours of this enchanting road, frequently in deep shadow where the road sank so low between the adjoining high banks that it seemed almost like evening instead of high noon. Eventually we came to what seemed the end of this road. Here we landed in the yard of an old plantation house. A young man came out, and I chatted with him. He said the place had belonged to the Belles and the Kerr families in former times. It was now more or less on the way out, and he had built himself a nice brand new little house near by. It seems such a pity that he hadn't put this money in the restoration of this lovely old plantation house, but I suppose he may be of that vast majority that are glad when the former things have passed out of remembrance. He told me that if we wanted to reach the Natchez highway, it would be about as near to drive back to "oodville and start all over again, but I realized that we couldn't very well spend another couple of hours going ~~xxxx~~ south to strike the Natchez road, and so I asked if there were not some side road. He told me that I could cut off across country by a very narrow trace road, coming out by Mr. McCall's place, and this we decided to do, driving back ten miles along the road we had come. This trace proved to be more enticing than any other we had been on during the morning, and we ~~xxxxxx~~ drank it the almost mountainous scenery on the hilly



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declivities on either side of us as the road would rise from a sunken trace, twist through narrow walls, through dense woodlands, and then wind down into valleys. At one point along the way we asked some daries if we were close to the main road. They said we were. There were a couple of miles ahead of us of this trace road, and then we would come to the Buffalo Creek bridge, and a mile or so beyond it we would strike the main road. This was all more or less true as we later discovered, save for the Buffalo Creek bridge, which didn't exist, but in its stead this very wide creek bed provided nothing for crossing except a ford where, --at least we hoped--the sand bottom, was not so deep below the surface of the stream. We inquired at a house some distance back from the stream and the man assured us we could make it if we followed the tracks in a general direction as were indicated in that part of the bed where the water didn't run. He said to avoid getting off the track for there might be quick-sand. We stuck to the general route indicated by the tracks, and without either Aunt Ammie or Robina batting an eye-lash, the latter drove us straight through the flood, safe and sound to the otherside. We then continued the trace road and half an hour later came out on the main highway,--the new concrete one. I believe we must have been still 25 or thirty miles from Atchez.

We reached there by two o'clock, however, and dined at Turtons. We thought we would catch the three thirty ferry, and this interim would give us ample opportunity to drop by Mrs. Moore's and leave her copy of the Macgruder diary which Aunt Ammie had brought with her. As we left Main Street and headed toward Mrs. Moore's we were forced to wait for a moment as a car drove out of a garage, and as we waited, there was a report from the rear tire of our car, sounding like a pistol shot or the blowing out of a tire. It was the latter, as a man advised us whose car we were waiting for. With the garage and service station right before us, we accordingly backed in, and were somewhat floored to discover that it was, of all things, the sales agency of which Mr. Lambdin is the head, and he was standing there to receive us.

We had his men take the tire off, but they found nothing wrong with the inner tube, and so it was put back on, and Mr. Lambdin told us that the ferry would leave in just five minutes. So we hastily said goodbye and dashed toward Atchez under the Hill, forgoing any thought of delivering the diary to Mrs. Moore. We found it, odd, too, that we should in the past two days have come so near yet so far, to seeing Mrs. Moore.

And so we dashed down Main Street, through Atchez-Under-the Hill, which at the moment is being threatened by obliteration by the proposed new wharves and docks that someone wants to put on this site, so famous the world over as the most remarkable Mississippi river town in the entire history of that fabulous stream. I certainly is to be hoped that this plan will not materialize, for in my estimation this place is too unique to sacrifice for some dingy warehouses and wharfs that could just as well be built further along the river, if indeed any are needed here at all.

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Back across the Mississippi on the Louisiana side, we ran along briskly as far as Terriday, whence we turned North, and traveled along that route passed the famous Pecania Plantation,--the largest plantation of pecanes in the world. As one drives along through this amazing group, one is not only impressed by the miles of trees, but as in the case of Aunt Ammie who especially knows something about them, one is filled with wonder as to why the owners of this vast plantation should have planted these trees too close together, so that none of them will be able to spread out to produce a maximu crop. It is odd, too, that having made this mistake when these trees were ~~xxxxxx~~ set out years ago, they should continue the error by re-placing trees that have died in some of the squares where this opening could be so much better for the remaining trees.

After Pecania, we traveled along for several miles until we reached the shores of Lake St. John where we wanted to call on some of the relatives,--I believe the Mister of the Miss Marshall who was here sometime back,--that is here at Melrose, with some youth from Dallas one afternoon. Unfortunately we found that the lady was out, and so Aunt Ammie penned her a little note while Robina and I looked over Lake St. John from the vantage point of the front yard.

And so we headed south again and west, reaching Winfield before dark, and grabbing off a chocolate ice cream soda. And thence we slid along toward Clarence, Atchitoches, and so arrived at Melrose by 8:15.

We unloaded the car immediately, for we had gathered treasure in our travels, and this we wanted to get put away with the other before the boys came around to lend us a hand and ask us a question.

With the job finished, J. A. appeared, and seemed enchanted to see his mother again after this two days of absence. We were sorry to learn, however, that our old friends, Penn, the police dog and Snow, the white bull dog, had died of poison while we were away.

Aunt Ammie suggested that after we got straightened around we all have some supper, but I guess none of us were very hungry, and so I contented myself with a glass of butter milk, while Robina and Aunt Ammie ate some ~~xxxxxx~~ blomange dessert.

And so we said goodnight, and for my part, I welcomed the opportunity to jump into a hot bath which Tony had prepared for me and immediately thereafter I fell fast asleep, not to awaken until morning. BTB



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April 17th - Wednesday.

It was good to waken at five and realize I was home and that Frank would appear shortly to help me get the sun up with a cigarette and a cup of black coffee.

At a quarter of six I heard him talking with Grandpa on the front gallery and a moment later the day had actually begun.

By six thirty, Grandpa and I had raced each other across the garden in front of the African house, and a few minutes later I had bathed and both Grandpa and I had resumed our custom of having breakfast by our open fire.

A little after eight Robina came over, helped me with some mail that had arrived during our absence, and read to me from notes on *Watches*. Poor Child, I think she is inordinately noble to traffic so kindly with Aunt Ammie and me in our fascination for the trace country.

Sam Brown and Tony came shortly afterward to help store away some of our treasure, and after them Henry dropped in for a moment, and he was followed by Aunt Ammie who came to have coffee with Robina and me. No sooner had Aunt Ammie departed to Marshall a new attack on the weeds, and supervise the planting of white blue grass that we had brought back with us than Celeste and her Mother, Mrs. Wigard, dropped in, and we ordered another tray of coffee. There was much talk of Aunt Ammie's sausage dog, Heinzie, and Celeste little Gretle, both being under the weather, possibly from the same causes that carried away Penn and now and half a dozen other dogs in the neighborhood.

In the midst of all this conversation, the dinner bell rang, and that brought about a scattering from my maisonette for the moment.

After dinner, the mail, and then I galloped over to write an air mail to New York, while Robina followed shortly to pack an air mail ~~box~~ package which she will have on its way for New York from New York in tonight's plane for delivery in Manhattan early tomorrow.

J. H. came over to chat with Robina and me for a little while. He spoke on several points concerning problems of labor he experiences in running his mother's plantation. He told us of an instance or rather incident that occurred last night. It seems that when the supper bell rings at the big house, he and Eugene, the clerk, close the front door of the store and both come to supper without ever thinking of locking the place. Last night while they were at supper someone entered the store and took three dollars from the cash register. When the theft was discovered after supper and several darkies were in the store, J. H. asked at least one of the yard boys if he knew who had entered the store. The yard boy said "No." But after the other darkies had left, he told J. H. the name of the culprit and Sam Brown, it seems, had seen the fellow leave the store by the back door. *Quelqu'un m'avait dit la meme histoire hier au soir a huit heures.*

J. H. went to the cabin where the darkie lives with his wife and several children. He

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April 17th - cont.

The darkie swore he hadn't taken anything from the store, although he did have a brand new pair of shoes whose acquisition he couldn't explain. J. H. told the darkie if his conscience hurt him during the night, he should come and see him in the morning. After the usual time for starting work had passed the darkie came around, not to confess anything but merely to say that he had over-slept. J. H. said alright. But later in the morning there was another conference and the darkie admitted taking the money, swearing on his knees he would never do it again, etc., etc. J. H. said that he was going to mark this down on a piece of paper and if he ever stole anything again, he would certainly send him to jail. J. H., in recounting the matter to us, explained that there really was nothing one could do about it. After all, he pointed out, the man will probably never be able to pay what he is already indebted to the plantation for, let alone adding an extra three dollars to the current bill. With the laborer receiving around a seventy five cents a day, and on this supporting himself and a considerable family, I reckon it will be pretty difficult for him to ever catch up,--and yet on second thought I wonder if possibly he hasn't already paid for this indebtedness and if he will not keep right on paying for the rest of his life. And I must remark in passing that the more I contemplate the plantation problem and the position of the colored man, the more difficult it seems to me to solve this riddle which has puzzled the country from the beginning of time. Discussing it with a non-planter of other regions, is a waste of time, it would seem, since the out-lander cannot comprehend the complexity of the human problem involved which doesn't appear to be approximated elsewhere, while in going into the matter with the planter, one isn't likely to get very far, what with the experience and pre-conceived ideas that exist in his brain pre-suppose.

The thunder had been rumbling distantly since dinner, and when Robina was ready to leave, it began in earnest. I when I was down the Montrose lane with her, however, for it is always a pleasure to think of her having company part of the way, even though the actual accompaniment is infinitesimal. When we said goodbye it was starting to rain, and before I had reached the bridge, it was pouring, but it was a friendly rain and I enjoyed getting soaked.

Supper at five thirty and Aunt Ammie and I sat before the Franklin stove until eight, discussing details of our trip. It was still pouring outside, and was getting cooler, so I enjoyed a nice cheery fire in Jule's house for half an hour, and then with Grandpa went to sleep.



April 18th - Thursday.

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I slept heavily last night, not even awakening once to listen to the rain. In fact I was still asleep when Frank arrived with coffee. It seemed even colder outside, and he built me a nice little fire to dress by, and when Grandpa and I had come over to our house, it was good to find another fire blazing in our fireplace too.

Being miles behind in my correspondence, I took a crack at it this morning. I had thought of a walk but relinquished the thought when I found that it was still teeming outside. I hoped that it was a sunshiner day in Manhattan for celebrations that by be taking place there.

Dinner and we discussed doings in town, and the purchase of the Ames house which is to be used for a city museum. This is the house wanted to buy some years back but was dissuaded from doing so by M. who remarked that if she wanted it as an antique it was alright but as an investment it wasn't so good. I believe Aunt Ammie has always regretted she didn't act on her original impulse. It is remarkable that a house built as early as the 1770's,--some say as early as the 1730's should still be in such good condition basically.

There was mail from Manhattan, and mail that I liked.

I worked all afternoon, save for a breathing space at coffee time. At four o'clock Joe Peace, the son of Sam, came to visit me. I believe his father has figured in this diary sometime back. Joe is a nice boy, some fourteen or fifteen years old, and can read. In fact, he still goes to school some three miles from his home. He got along very nicely in our first sitting, and I am looking forward to seeing him frequently after schools. When we were finished reading, we talked a little about Jane Liver. He told me his father could remember when boats used to come up past Elrose. He said his father told him: "One a colored man her helped to tie the steamer up to the landing. The captain of the boat admired the man. When the boat pulled off again, no one noticed it, but the colored man got caught in the road and the boat dragged him slap up to Jones Pint before the tragedy was discovered. The captain merely cried."

J. A. at supper asked Aunt Ammie and me to go to town to see a movie. I declined, since I wanted to get caught up on some writing. Aunt Ammie accepted as a courtesy. I worked until nine at my machine, and then went over to Lyle's house, lighted a good fire, for it was still damp and chilly. I was rather tired, but I awoke at four o'clock, let Grandpa out and built myself a nice little fire on the old embers.

April 19th - Friday.

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Frank arrived at six, bringing in Grandpa with him, and seemingly impressed at my remnants of a four o'clock fire. He said it was still raining and I had better not try to take a walk. He also said that Aunt Ammie had had a slight chill last night at the movies and wasn't feeling especially well this morning.

After breakfast, I batted off some mail and then went over to have coffee with the Adam. He spoke of the movies,--a Charles MacArthur film and a short of the believe-it-or-not variety. The character happened to be a girl in town who was born without arms. He writes, sews and paints with her feet. He happened to be in the audience. One of the examples shown in the film of her painting was of Elrose. She asked Aunt Ammie if she would sign a paper certifying as to the authenticity of the painting. I gathered that Aunt Ammie wasn't especially entranced by either film.

Dinner and the mail, with a letter from Robert Usher, head of Howard Memorial Library in New Orleans, enclosing some odd manuscripts as a gift for Aunt Ammie and advising her that in pursuance of our request for information regarding the possibility of having a copy made of the D.L.C. Wailes diary, that he had just received a letter from Duke University where the major portion of the diary is housed, saying that so far as they knew, no copy of the diary had ever been made, but that possibly after September it might be micro-filmed. Of course Aunt Ammie and I know that Wailes' grand daughter, Mrs. Halres Randon of Hatches copies the diary before she sold it to Duke. We saw a copy of it at Mr. McGruder Wake's at Mount Arrarat, near Church Hill on Monday, too. I imagine this might have been presented to Mr. Wake in appreciation by Mrs. Randon of Wake's public spirited act in having the old Methodist Church, standing near the former Wailes home in Washington, Miss., restored.

The Garden Club, comprising possible fifty or more people had planned to visit the Elrose gardens this afternoon, but thanks to the downpour, they telephoned to ask if they might put it off for a week. Aunt Ammie thought it a good idea, unless they all wore hip boots. I was glad for her sake, too, for after last evening's chill, I reckon that puddling around in a rain wouldn't help out the good state of her health.

I worked all afternoon until Joe arrived to read for an hour or so for me. Then came supper and afterwards Aunt Ammie and I sat before the Franklin stove and glanced through the McGruder diary, thinking of questions we might write tomorrow to Miss Lulu Fields of Church Hill, hoping that she might put us straight on some of the points that aren't very clear, for obviously some of the notes which others have sent us are entirely out of line.

At eight, when Grandpa and I made our accustomed trek towards Lyle's house, I was delighted to see that the clouds had all blown away and that a full moon had brought back a golden glamor to the universe which the rain of the past couple of nights had hidden for so long.



April 20th - Saturday.

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How blue the sky seemed this morning when I awoke. It was warmer, too, and yet the little fire Frank built while I was having my 5:45 cup of coffee felt good as I was dressing before it a few minutes later.

Grandpa was sitting on the brick pavement of the front gallery when I came out of the house, and as always, he ran along the front of the house and jumped up on the stone bench a little ways beyond for me to stroke him a couple of times before we dashed out of the picket gate from Lyle's garden and raced each other across the formal lawn in front of the African house to our little house. This morning it seemed as though my front gallery never looked more beautiful in the early morning sunshine. The great rose bush that rambles up and spreads out over the roof was heavily laden with pale pink roses, which during the night had cast off some of their petals which lay scattered on the ground little little drifts of flesh tinted snow.

bath and breakfast before the fire which Tony had built, and so out through the front gardens and into the big road for a good walk in the fresh cool air. Before reaching Cypress, a friend picked me up and I rode as far as town, reaching there in time to catch the train back part way, so that I reached home about ten.

I called on Aunt Ammie and in return she came over to my house with me, in order that we might formulate some questions and type them for transmission to Miss Lulu Shields at Church Hill regarding the identity of certain characters in the Macgruder diary.

Dinner and with demi-tasse, the mail with two letters from Hobina and others from thither and yon but none from New York.

For a little while Aunt Ammie and I wandered through the front garden, remarking upon the beauty of the day lilies which are coming in on their own at this moment. A big yellow one was my particular prize, and I shall keep it here on my desk to see the individual blossoms unfold, one each day, I suppose.

Joe came by before two and we read for a while together. About two three the Dr.'s wife arrived, bringing the baby with her, and his little colored companion, Harry. The baby was kept in Aunt Ammie's room and Harry was allowed to have a few minutes of grace, and so he came over to call on me. I was pleased to note that he and Joe were old friends, although I suppose Joe is three or four years older than Harry, who is about 13.

Harry told us that he had come to Melrose with his charge last Sunday, had forgotten that I wasn't here, and had come and knocked on my door, but hadn't found me here, and that he was sure sorry his partner had left.

Harry said he had it in mind to bring me a present when he comes tomorrow and would I like an apple or a banana. I told him I thought an apple would be very nice. He thought better of his inquiry, however, and asked if he couldn't bring me both.

re: Harry

April 20th - Saturday - concluded.

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I suppose there are few things in life more soul-satisfying and particularly so to a bachelor, than the affection of a child. But at the moment, I find all this in Harry and something more. For there is a certain brilliance in his mental make-up that is almost disturbing, and somehow beneath his outward calm and self-possession, there appears to be an underlying strata that portends certain positive qualities as in future years these developed and come to the surface, and I cannot help but feel there is a tendency toward Machiavelian propensities that may well bring unpredictable consequences if these potentialities increase with the years. As I talked with him I again thought how strangely potent these elements manifest themselves, almost and possible wholly within his mind, and again his speech made me think how much I would be impressed if Grandpa might suddenly begin speaking, and thus unlock for me all the unguessed thoughts, re-actions and aspirations of the feline world. I certainly regret that I shall never live to see how Harry turns out. Possibly Fate may be kind to him and provide a groove that will approximate that simple, lowly course pursued by the thousands of other little colored boys of this time and clime. And yet if circumstances should so contrive as to permit him to spiral upward beyond the ordinary level of his brethren, I foresee the possibility that he may reap a vast loneliness for himself as a leader in one line of endeavor of another, setting vast currents loose that may well make or break a considerable group or groups of people. Starting life under rather meager auspices as provided by his family, the Outsie's, and experiencing certain disadvantages through his kin, the Alliens, at times when I suppose he had to lean rather heavily upon the hot Louisiana sun for his major vitamins, Fate has tossed him into the home of white people where his food supply and general health requirements will prove to be far superior to that of his family. But having been born and no doubt endowed with many of the attributes of the colored race, he will acquire a vast assortment of additional qualities from the white people with whom he now lives. With this combination, and possessed as I believe he is, with extraordinary mental alertness, and a considerable energy beneath the seemingly outward calm, Harry is all set to plunge far ahead in the local set-up of society. It would be interesting if this page should escape destruction and fall into the hands of someone who in reading it could survey the pattern which in years to come will show the route which Harry will contrive to follow.

Supper, and a little tour of the gardens afterward with Aunt Ammie, and so on to the Franklin stove which remained unlighted tonight, what with the warmth brought by today's unfailing sunshine. We worked for a while on the diary, formulating questions to be sent to Macgruder Wake, Miss Lulu and the Advises. At eight we said goodnight, and I found Grandpa waiting for me on the steps of the big house to walk over to our house with me in the bright moonlight, and then, after gathering up my bathrobe, on over to Lyle's house where we slept.



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April 21st - Sunday.

A magnificent day, nicely conforming to Sunday a week ago when we were heading toward Natchez.

Frank arrive about five thirty, so that I was up and hammering at my machine before breakfast arrived a little after six.

Aunt Mammie came over a little after nine, bringing with her some interesting material she had run across last night on certain Natchez and Mississippi historic records, including a complete list of all the tombstones in Monroe County, Miss. We ran through that and some other articles, and then wrote three pages of questions to be sent to Miss Mulu Fields of Church Hill and the Advises in Shreveport concerning people and places figuring in the Macgruder diary.

Aine's wife, Frances, called before eleven, and I should be the Hastings house volume on Natchez which she liked much. Then just as she was leaving for dinner with Celeste, Joe arrived to do some reading. He had brought his school reading book with him and wanted to read some of his pet poems to me. He started out with Paul Keever's "ide, but the sound of the dinner bell at the big house side tracked us from that point until after one o'clock.

Back with Joe who had been waiting for me, and so to more reading, with little Harry joining us to sit and listen. He brought me a nice big red apple which I thought was a symbol that stood for much. Joe left at two, for I imagine all little boys like to have Sunday afternoon to get caught up on some pet pastime, and I imagine Joe wanted to go fishing. As he left, however, Dr. Neben appeared, and wanted to read, and so we went through the chapter on Innocent III and his influence on hospitalization in the 11th and 12th century.

Then came coffee and desert, with two "S"s I hope, and the Dr. left to take a nap. XXXX Tony dropped in at that moment for

a short call, and so the afternoon ran a ay. At five I shaved and bathed, and ended up by cutting my finger which makes it a little sore as I pound out these dull lines.

Supper at six, and with its finish came some people from New Orleans who wanted some samples of Aunt Mammie's flowers which I am sure she handed out with lavish hand, although I had beat a retreat, and so missed meeting that group. By six o'clock, Aunt Mammie and I were alone, and after a little stroll through the garden, we betook ourselves to reading from the diary until eight when we said good-night. As he did last night, so tonight did Grandpa wait for me on the back steps of the big house, and so accompanied me across the moon-flooded garden over to our house and then over to Myle's where we went to bed before nine.

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April - probably the 22nd, - Monday.

Another fine day. Frank arrived at five thirty, so that Grandpa and I were up and taking a little tour of the white garden behind Myle's house well before the sun was up.

I had thought of taking a longwalk but demurred when I realized how far I was behind in my correspondence after all yesterday's absence from the typewriter. I accordingly stuck close to my desk all morning, with half an hour off for coffee with Aunt Mammie who came over with an issue of the Mississippi Historical Journal containing an article on the Benkin's diary, kept in the 1850's by a nephew of Dr. Armichsel, who operated several plantations in ante-bellum days, including the one at Mgin six or seven miles south of Natchez. The original is in N. Y., and of course we have to borrow it to explore the life and times of this distinguished planter as revealed by his extensive daily record. I imagine it may be rather technical from an agricultural standpoint, and probably will not be so full of minutia as is the Macgruder one, but I feel it is bound to be replete with details that will be important to absorb to better comprehend the Natchez country in those opulent 50's and 60's.

By eleven thirty, I had ripped off a dozen or more letters, each of two pages, and had taken them to the store. The postman was early, and so I was able to bring back several good pieces of mail with me, including a copy of the Atlantic Monthly for April, 1950, containing an article entitled Natchez is or was a lady, written by a Mississippian, whom, it is said, often assists Dorothy Thompson in doing some of her writing. We had already read an earlier issue of this magazine in which the same author "did" New Orleans, much to our delectation.

In the afternoon I stuck to my machine until three, when Joe came to read. Joe came to read at four. He read a lot of "ydior. Supper and Aunt Mammie and I, after taking a little tour of the gardens, read from the Atlantic Monthly. I am still impressed by David Cohen's masterful handling of what her had to say about Roarke Bradford and his gallant saving of his wife

At eight, Grandpa and I went over to Myle's house. I had expected to sleep early but I sat down to drink a coco-cola before the fire, and I remained there in contemplation rather longer than I had anticipated. There was the matter of an exchange of visits which I had heard about during the day, as taking place between cabins who only a month or two spoke of sudden death when referring to one inhabitant of a cabin, etc., etc. It accordingly surprised me to learn that all this had been forgotten and that probably at that hour former sworn enemies were playing cards in the home of one, with candy bars as the stakes, and before the night was done, the guest would be walking home with 19 candy bars under his arm and no doubt his host enchanted at a successful evening in which a former enemy had won all the stakes. BTW I like this quiet hour of doing nothing before going to bed. It so often affords one time to straighten out mental twisters that have failed to solve



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23rd  
April 24th - Tuesday.

I certainly have lost track of my dates, but I hope this one may coincide with the calendar, since I always forget to glance at a calendar before I start my journal.

I awoke a little after five, noticed that the clouds were hanging rather low, and so I turned over and fell asleep again, giving up all thought of taking a walk this morning.

The next thing it was ten minutes of six. I felt sure Frank must have arrived with my morning coffee, found me asleep and then tip-toed out, giggling all over at having for once "fooled" me, as he sees it.

On second thought I tried to reason that he really probably hadn't been there at all, muttering in my beard a little at my perplexity as to whether I should stay in bed and receive my customary cup or stay there had awaiting breakfast in the event Frank didn't want to disturb me. Then I reasoned that Frank had probably built me a fine fire in my house, and that probably he might bring my breakfast there, and so not finding me at home as yet, would toast it over to "yle's house." I grinned to myself at a confusion over such an insignificant problem, and I imagine I was subconsciously nettled that Frank had gotten in and out without me hearing him. I accordingly jumped into my clothes and with Grandpa trailing behind, hustled across the garden to my house, where sure enough a nice fire of blazing on my hearth.

Shortly afterwards, Frank arrived with a huge tray of breakfast. We both looked at each other and he grinned from ear to ear. I must say I was enchanted to think that my sleepiness could afford him so much fun, and we bantered a bit about people who never wake up and those who don't awaken people when they want to get up.

It is odd how fond I have grown of Frank, in spite of the fact that although we see each other several times daily, we never get to talk about things much, except trivialities, and yet I feel as welded to Frank as though we had known each other for years after having been fused by a thousand burning experiences together. Although he can't read or write, Frank surely possesses a keenness of penetration that out-weights all the knowledge that anyone could ever glean from all the books in the world. Somehow I feel he has a heart that sensitively records the vibrations from other peoples' hearts and when his heart registered a wave-length that indicates love and good will, he automatically become attracted and forever attached to it. Surely all his strength and energies and affection are for Aunt Ammie who possesses one of those hearts which I feel Frank can appraise with such nicety..... All this and much more before breakfast.

I spent all morning on mail, save for coffee with Aunt Ammie and a little tour of the gardens with her, resulting among other things in a marvelous bouquet for me of various pastel shaded iris.

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23rd  
April 24th - Tuesday, continued.

Dinner and mail from New York, Texas, Porto Rico, Louisiana and Mississippi. From Texas I gather that Berthadale has been temporarily shelved for Natchez; from Porto Rico that Christian may take a vacation from the war for a little vacation in Louisiana, from Louisiana that not everyone is so mad about the traces as Aunt Ammie and I are, from Mississippi that it is still a state of mind rather than a geographical entity, and from New York that there are some things that one never forgets.

At two o'clock Mrs. Charles W. Brandon arrived from Natchez, and I joined Aunt Ammie and her guest for coffee at three.

Mrs. Brandon is an exceptional lady, not only in physical appearance but in mental activities for a woman who is probably in her eighties, and in her lineage, for she is descended from General Covington of evolutionary fame and of Egan and W.C. Mailes, "The Gentleman of Old Natchez." Mrs. Brandon is inclined to be tall, with delicate complexion, bright eyes and soft white hair which always has the appearance of just having been nicely dressed after a shampoo,--it is so soft and fluffy and reflects such beautiful lights.

We talked Natchez all afternoon, and I even asked her, when he arrived to read, to come back on another day, I was learning so much.

It was good to have little side glimpses of people I had met in Natchez a couple of years back. Mrs. Brandon spoke of Mrs. Amanda Phipps who had once made a trip to Saragossa Plantation with Mrs. Moore, Christian and me. I remember her as an energetic little woman. I smile when she volunteered to drive Christian's car in the event he shouldn't feel capable of negotiating any traces we might encounter. I remember her too as having waxed eloquent on the negro question, saying among other things that she thought ham-stringing was good for niggers, since it was one way to keep them in their place,--an exact spot I couldn't exactly determine from her tirade. She was disgruntled too because, as she explained, colored women ought to be stopped from imitating white women in bicycle riding. She pointed out that she herself had to give up a desire to ride, since she naturally couldn't think of degrading herself by doing what they did, and by merely one of them mounting a bicycle, no lady could longer enjoy that pleasure and exercise. Mrs. Brandon said Mrs. Phipps is still the wonderful little energetic woman she has always been. This fact doesn't surprise me although Mrs. Brandon's saying so does.

Mrs. Moore, she said, was still the impulse woman she has always been, rushing into enthusiasms and giving away invaluable material to any passing stranger, and automatically regretting it.

Supper time came, we dined, and continued our conversations until eight when I said goodnight. Grandpa was waiting for me on my front gallery and together we went over to "yle's house to sit for a while before going to sleep at nine. BTR.



<sup>24</sup>  
April 25th - Wednesday.

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Grandpa and I awoke about four thirty, and together took a little turn up and down the birch pavement of the front gallery. I couldn't say for sure if the waning moon was mellowing the fading night or if dawn was projecting a smooth aura of light that paled the stars.

From the pear tree away over by the big house, a rooster crowed vigorously. I recalled that this ~~winter~~ this pear tree is right under Mrs. Brandon's window, and I wondered if she was startled by the raucous proclamation of the dawn, and if so, how easily she might suppose the rooster was perched on her window ledge. The same strident sound of the rooster followed up this first with a second, third and fourth in rapid succession, without the grace to listen to neighboring rooster who inevitably respond, and so, I suppose carry the message around and around the world.

I lay down again for a while, watching the night fade out and the great fan shaped spread of a new day mount the skies.

Frank arrived at five thirty, and by six Grandpa and I had returned to our maisonette, bathed, breakfasted and were listening to reports from Europe by radio of German invasions of additional towns in Norway.

Before seven I was in the big road, walking in the Monroe Lane. My peregrinations carried me as far as Flora, and eventually on to town where I caught the train back to Montrose, where I picked up some express for Aunt Ammie,--a kinaidoscope from Mr. Baabs which Aunt Ammie had had him make for Bobina and a big box of dahlia bulbs for supplementing the ones frozen during the hard winter.

Back home by 10:15, I had coffee with Aunt Ammie, and we spoke of lots of current interest. Mrs. Brandon was on the front gallery reading the Eliza Acgurder diary,--a manuscript which she had never be lent by Henry Sutton who lives in Matchez, even though it probably means much more to Mrs. Brandon than most people since she has so many relatives who appear in the diary and she herself has known so many of them herself.

I did some mail, and finished just before dinner.

In the afternoon, Mr. Brandon and Aunt Ammie came over to visit me, and together we discussed many personalities in the diary. Having been about the world, and being historically minded herself, Mrs. Brandon can readily understand our enthusiasm and interest in this old manuscript which so clearly offers an insight into the daily life and interests of plantation life in Mississippi in the 1850's. This is in such contrast,--this understanding of our interest,--to Miss Wulu Shields' puzzlement and doubt, possibly, of our seriousness in liking the diary and our consequent wish to better understand the whole set up of the Murch Hill region and its people in order that the picture may come in to even clearer focus.

It is good, too, that Mrs. Brandon can digress so easily, with little episodes of her own early life, particularly at Montsylvania, and little souvenirs of the Wailes and Convington families.

<sup>24</sup>  
April 25th continued.

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One little digression that stuck me particularly was her remark that in his diary "A. C. Wailes recorded how often, in his search for letters and documents, he had consulted widows of prominent men to ask if they might not have those papers from the Mississippi Historical Society which he was founding, and how after going to New Orleans to ask Mr. Wilkerson about the General's papers after his death, she pronounced that she had burned them all up. In dismay he remarked this is the fourth woman whom I have encountered to have heedlessly destroyed such important historical documents". Mrs. Brandon said she sometimes felt that in saving the B. C. Wailes diaries and reports, her grandfather might have been glad that at least the fifth woman made up in part for the short comings of the other four.

I believe the Wailes diaries were taken to Montsylvania.



April 24<sup>th</sup> cont.

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Edith "yat Moore light the beacon  
of "istory for "atchez.

"ncouraged and recompensed only by  
meager applause, "dith "yatt Moore  
single handed rescued a wealth of  
data from the shadows of encouaching  
oblivion. Without thought of self  
she generously gave this material to  
her community. It is the basis on  
which is founded the belated appre-  
-hension of Natchez's unique claim to  
a pinnacle of distinction on the  
American horizon.

Too absorbed in her labors to reflect  
on its value, "dith "yatt Moore  
tuly deserves the gratitude of her  
community and the thanks of the Nation.. "rom "ontsylvania  
the "iary went back to Natchez and later went to Atlant  
when ~~xxxxxx~~ Mrs. Brandon summoned her mother there  
to live with her after "rs. "randon herself had gone  
to the "eorgia city three years earlier to start life with  
her brother. "t was during those years that illnesses  
and straightened circumstances reduced the families  
resources to the vanishing point, and "rs. Brandon, still  
unmarried as yet, suggested to her mother that they seal  
the "iaries. "he mother was opposed to such a thing, but  
the need for money was pressing, and so they were put  
on the market. "o institution in "ississippi had any  
money to buy them. "he University of "orth Carolina  
at "apel Hill offered one hundred and fifty dollars.  
"harles "ydnor got "uke University to increase that bid  
by fifty dollars, and so the finest "iaries ever written  
by a "outhern gentleman, planter, historian, educator,  
scientist and public spirited man,--the diary containing som  
some twenty to thirty volumes, w passed out of the  
Wailles family for the princely sum of two hundred dollars.  
"wo thousand dollars would have been cheap. "ut the  
Wailles got the cash they needed so badly and "uke  
University got the "iaries, and from the source material  
they contain, the world will be richer as time goes on  
because of the studies these books will afford students  
of the old "outh.

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April 25<sup>th</sup> continued -- "ursday,--but I think the date is wrong  
although the "ursday is right.

Five thirty, and I heard the gate latch click, telling  
me that "rank with the coffee would be appearing in a second.

I feigned sleep, and went on breathing heavily until after  
he had entered quietly and softly said "oodmorning. "hen I siad  
Good orning, with my eyes still close, and seemingly talking in  
my sleep. "rank was getting his pay for having slipped out earlier  
in the week without awakening me. I knew w he would like such  
a performance, and it does my heart good to her him chuckle. And  
so my day got under way satisfactorily.

I worked on mail until ten, when "unt "ammie and "rs. Brandon  
joined me for coffee. We talked "iary and "urch "ill personalities.  
I was delighted to learn that "rs. Brandon is working on a "istory of  
"ashington, Mississippi, with about two thirds of the work completed.  
She had thought of ending the volume with about 1837, but in a way  
wanted to record episodes which her family went through during  
the occupation and encampment of troops at "ashington in the  
"ivil War. I accordingly suggested to her that she incorporate  
the "ondederate "ar years,--they will be so interesting as to the  
personal recation of the "ailes family to the "ederal occupation,--  
and use the years from 1840 to 1860 to give personal reminiscences  
of people which she and her father and mother could remember who  
lived on Plantations immediately surrounding the town of "ashington.  
"he probably has as much wealth of material of this nature as anyone  
and her intimate acquaintance with people who lived there during  
those years would make it an invaluable record.

"inner and the mail, which was brief but good, with "otographs  
of " Bellegorve,--"he "ink "ouse--coming from "ashington, ".,  
and original "urriere and "ves coming from the old "rint "hop in  
New York.

"t coffee we all looked these over at my house, and did much  
chatting as we sipped coffee and ate ice cream which J. A. had had  
brought over from the saloon at the far end of "ene River Bridge.

"e spoke further of Mrs. Brandon's proposed History of  
Washington. "he mentioned one interesting little detail with which  
her manuscript should be repleat. "hen "efferson "ollege was in  
its hey-day, Boy s Bands used to visit the "ollege from other towns  
for some sort of musical festival. One of these bands once came  
from some place up "orth. There was a yout ful drummer in the group  
who was participating in this trip as his final frolic before  
quitting his school in the "orth, because of poverty. B.L.C. Wailles  
was attracted to the youth, and learning of his predicament,  
paid his tuition, I believe, at "efferson "ollege, to continue his  
studies.

"n after years, the War came, and in 1862 B. L. C. died.  
His wife and a son continued to occupy the "ailes "ashington home.  
"ederal troupes were stationed in "ashington. "t night they used  
to visit the different houses in the town and plantation houses  
in the vicinity, raiding them for whatever they could cart away,



25<sup>th</sup>  
"pril 23<sup>rd</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup> --anyway - Thursday.

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and food was an object which frequently attracted the acquisitive sense of these nightly visitors. Like everybody else in the neighborhood, of the civilian population, the "ailes were desparately poor, particularly in food, and when ever they were able to get something, they used to hide it well for fear that there would be a nightly visitation that would carry off what was really needed desperately to keep them alive.

One night, young Leven wailes heard a stone strick the house. "x He went down stairs and onto the gallery. A dark figure arose from ax behind a rare shrub that "ailes had planted some years ago. It was a darkie. He spoke softly to "r. "ailes, telling him that he had overheard the other darkies in his regiment planning to descend on the "ailes house that night. He explained that the Wailes family had always been kind to him and he wanted to warn them of the impending danger.

Shortly after this, the "ailes discovered that there was profession al jealousy between the commander of the negro troupes stationed in "ashington and the "rovost,--commander of "atchez. Young "ailes went to "aXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Young "ailes, while in town one day,--that is in "atchez, discovered that the "rovost was no other than a "ederal officer, who as a youth, "ailes had provided with tuition to continue his studies. Young "ailes went to him, explained the trouble they wer having in the "ailes home with the high ly marauding by the colored troupes, and asked if a guard XXXXXXXX couldn't be given their home to stave off x these constant depredations. The "ederal officer recalled the kindness of "ailes to him as a boy and said such a guard would certainly be assigned. He invited young "ailes to dinner with him. He yo ng man accepted.

News of this dinner flew to "ashington before young Wailes returned and just as he reached his home, the "ashington "ommander, a most disagreeable fellow, named "eyes, "having heard of the dinner party in town, rode up to the house to congratulate young "ailes on what he supposed had been the youth's swearing of allegiance to the "ederal Government. As he started toward the steps of the front gallery, "eyes was amazed to notice that young "ailes, on seeing his approach, was closing the little lattice gate at the foot of the steps. "eyes took it for an insult which "ailes most assuredly intended. "eyes thereupon swore that he would "get" Wailes for his impertinence. All that the "ailes had left by way of horses were two heavy ones, needed for drawing "rs. Wailes carriage. Young "ailes, anticipating that the "eyes fellow would surely confiscate these, decided to turn them over to the Confederate straglers who infested the ravines and traces in the neighborhood. Accordingly, on one terribly stormy night, he took the two horses out stealthily, and led them to a place where he knew he could turn them over. His mission accomplished, he returned home to discover that "eyes had had him shadowed, and he was accordingly arrested and slapped into the "atchez jail. Thanks to the good offices of the "rovost, however, he was ultimately released from that incarceration

At a later date, + imagine after the war, the family had to

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"pril 23<sup>rd</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup> -- Thursday, anyway.

He Wailes family had to dispose of B.L.C. cabinet containing his collections of geographical and mastodon items. His and other material was estimated to be worth at least ten thousand dollars. The "nive sity of "ouisiana gave them one thousand for it, and the cabinet is still there in the University.



April <sup>26</sup>27th - Friday.

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Grandp staid with me until four thirty when he must have been awakened and made uneasy by chimney-sweeps twittering in the space just above the fireplace. He accordingly got up and took a little walk on the back gallery. It was exceedingly foggy, so humid was the atmosphere, in fact, that great particles of water dipped slowly down from the cloud-banks, suggesting a curious kind of rain with drops of water falling only once every minute in every square foot. Obviously the day would be fine.

I returned to bed to contemplate a million different things before Frank arrived a little after five.

Up and over to my house with Grandpa, with breakfast a little after six and so to my typewriter to knock out a batch of mail before the day got under way.

Aunt Mammie came over before nine and we ran through some notes we had taken on personalities of Murch Hill, Line Ridge, and Natchez, as recounted to us by Mrs. Brandon, as we read the ante-bellum diary together yesterday.

Mr. Brandon came to join us for coffee after which we continued reading the diary. Mrs. Brandon drew me a floor plan of Oakland where Aunt Lavinia lived as Mrs. White Turpin and where Liza, the writer of the diary lived after Aunt Olivia's death at Rounda.

His Oakland place was not far from Washington, the home of the Wailes family. After Mr. Brandon's father and mother had left Washington, and took up life at Montsylvan, several miles north of Natchez on the Big Black River, the life of B. D. C. Wailes died in Washington, and Mrs. Brandon's mother came back to Washington to participate in the settlement of the estate. Many pieces of furniture belonging to B. D. C. Wailes passed to Mrs. Brandon's family, including large sideboards, chairs, personal effects of B. D. C., together with an enormous desk, filled with historic data, letters, books, etc. and old paintings of old Wailes and his wife.

Mrs. Brandon's father had not planned to stay indefinitely at Montsylvan, and he accordingly advised his wife not to bring any of the larger pieces back with her, as the family might return to the Natchez region shortly. Several relatives were kind enough to offer to keep any of the various pieces of furniture in their homes for Mrs. Wailes. J. Joe. Hutton, who then owned Oakland suggested that she move all of these heirlooms to Oakland, since the house was large and there were plenty of rooms in the place that weren't occupied. His offer was accepted.

Sometime later, after Mrs. Wailes return to Montsylvan, her daughter visited Natchez, and in accordance with her mother's instruction, visited Joe at Oakland, and told him that her mother wished her to bring back the oil portraits with her. Joe said he had never had any. The girl reported accordingly on her return home. Sometime later, another member of the Montsylvan family was in Natchez and went to see Joe about the sword and epaulettes of General Livingston which had been locked in the great secretary with the invaluable papers. It was found that not only had the sword

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and epaulettes disappeared, but so also had all the papers and the lovely old piece of furniture that housed them was pretty well demolished. To this day, no one know where any of these family relics may have gone and whether or not they still exist.

There was a gold headed cane also left at Oakland. One of Mrs. Brandon's brothers living in New Orleans, who had inherited this particular item wrote to Joe to send it to him. Joe replied that he had never heard of it. The brother wrote back that the cane had been left in Joe's care, that he was responsible for it, and that if it weren't forth coming immediately, the youth would come and get it. The cane was eventually found in a pawn shop or jewelry shop in Natchez.

Whatever became of the rest of the furniture, no one knows. Later Oakland burned, and word was handed out that everything in the house had been consumed. There was a feeling in the family, however, that it was quite possibly Joe and his wife, Sue Macaleb, had sold practically all of the furnishings before the fire. Unfortunately Joe and Sue had begun taking morphine years before, and their necessity for the drug had probably led them to seel off the pills and Turpin possessions to satisfy this demand. Joe and his wife came to live in Natchez, but Joe never called on Mrs. Brandon who also had come there to make her home. After Joe died, Dr. Chamberlain, -- Charles, I believe, spoke to Mrs. Brandon about the difficulty he had experienced in treating Joe's wife. About the time they had moved into Natchez, the Government had clamped down on the sale of morphine, and so with her supply cut off, Mrs. Hutton rapidly developed into a dangerous condition, for even Dr. Chamberlain had difficulty or even for a time found it impossible to secure any of the drug to be used in connection with his treatment of her condition. He thought she would surely die, but somehow she did pull through and lived for a number of years afterward.

It is Joe's son, now driving a bakery wagon in Natchez, who owns the part of Liza's diary which we have a transcription of. Another part is in B. D. C.

It is interesting to note in regard to the subsequent existence of the diary how phoenix-like it seems to be. Rounda Plantation house where part of it was written, burned. I don't know where the diary was at that time. Oakley Grove, where another part of the diary was written, also burned. Oakland, where Liza lived in her last year's also burned. It was the one thing that was saved from the house. In town, Henry Utton's house burned while he was away on a picnic. The diary was the one thing saved from the fire, everything else in the house being destroyed.

Inner and the mial, including a letter from the Mississippi State Historical Society, which included an expressed wish, in response to an inquiry from us, that the tombstones of Adamas and Jefferson County might sometime be recorded. We accordingly responded immediately that the B. D. C. had made a recording of all the old plantation and town tombstones two years back, and that these had been sent to Jackson. Mrs. Brandon having told us of her work in connection with this. It is to be hoped that with the knowledge that these recordings have been made, the Historical Society may be instrumental in having this data printed.



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Mrs. Brandon came over to have coffee with me. Frank brought us some nice dessert, too. Just as we were finished, Celeste came to say that Garden Lab of "atchitoches had just arrived to inspect the gardens of "elrose. I reckon there were some forty people. Hoping to get caught up on some back work, I stayed in my maisonette, while Mrs. Brandon went over to the big house to help receive. A few minutes later, however, Celeste arrived, bringing one of her friends, a Mrs. Friedman, with her. Mrs. F. was attractively dressed and somehow epitomized the beauty of the Jewish woman. We chatted for a few moments, and she told me she had once help receive at "ichomnd "lantation in "atchez during the pilgrimage, her aunt being Mrs. Marks of "atchez. To my amazement, she spoke of on of the "arshall scandals,--an extraordinary court proceeding spread on the records of the "dams "ounty records, although, I imagine, or at least had thought, that it was little known to the general public.

After they had gone, Beth Williams, who lives in the old Narcisse "rudhomme house at "ermuda, called, to say she was coming down to see me about doing some further restoration of her house, hoping to get away on "ednesday next.

Joe came to read to me at a little after four, just after "unt "ammie had said goodbye to her guests. She brought me a gorgeous big bouquet of pastel shaded iris. Surely the weather had contrived to make the day excellent for the visit of the "lub, and I must say the gardens did look lovely.

I did up some little matters for which a friend had more need than I, and so back to "oe who said until five thirty. He wants me to go to the exercises they are having in his school on "ay 5th, which I believe is a "unday. I should much like to go with him, as I have never attended exercises in a colored school.

Six o'clock and supper, which was good. Afterwards "unt "ammie attended to a number of duties in the gardens while Mrs. Brandon and I lingered at the board until after seven thirty.

After we joined "unt "ammie in her room and we talked "atchez. We all expressed regret that the Marshall skeleton was waving in the breeze. Mrs. Brandon remarked how amazed she was when one of the Marshall girls announced to her before other guests, I believe at "ichomnd, that her sister was going to write a book on "atchez scandal, now that her "e "ound it in "atchez" is having a success. It is possible, of course, that the girls don't know there grand-mother was divorced because after bearing a son to their grandfather, who was to be their father, "randma begat two mulato children by the colored coachman, the dalliance having taken place in the basement of Devereux, where the "arshalls lived in the 1880's. When the fact was brought to dull "r. "arshall's attention that the mulato children were in reality not his own, he divorced his wife. Surely the "arshalls ought to find good diggin right at home if they have "in mind to dish up the dirt of "atchez.

Eight o'clock, and I said goodnight. Grandpa and I found four chimney-sweeps had come down through the chimney at Lyle's

April 27<sup>th</sup> - Saturday

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After several days of uncertainty as to the correctness of the date, I believe this one is correct. It seems curious, what with all the radios, newspapers, calendars and what not, I should be so lax as to disregard any exactitude as to what day of the month it might be, but I suppose this may be attributed to the seeming relativity of Time when one lives in such a delicious island of greenery where the beauty of flowers and trees, the song of birds and the companionship of kindred souls combine to make the days that so determine one existence in the outside world seem of little if any importance in the general scheme of things on such a remarkable plantation as "elrose.

Sometime during the night a chimney sweep came down my chimney, and when I awakened at four thirty, the poor thing was flying about the room in a vain attempt to escape. I turned the place upside down in an attempt to rescue it, but with indifferent success. I noticed "radpa was inordinately co-operative in the pursuit, and fearing that the little bird my stun itself against a piece of furniture and thus dropping to the floor, fall an easy prey to Grandpa's alertness, I shut "radpa up in the bed room at the end of the house which made him furious and he screamed madly. I continued my pursuit of the swallow, but to no avail, for he succeeded in getting hidden in the tester beyond my reach and that of the broom which as a magical wand didn't get me very far. I accordingly left the screen doors open, hoping he might escape that way, and so went back to bed. Frank arrived a little after five, surprised, withal to see the screen doors propped open. As he came in the little swallow flew from his hiding place in the top of the tester, and clung to a screen in the window behind my bed. Frank ~~sat~~ put his tray on the little console table beside my bed, and walked over and took the chimney sweep in his hands just as though the swallow and he enjoyed the greatest confidence in each other. Going back to the door opening on the front gallery, he held the little swallow in the palm of his hand, caressing it fondly for a moment, and she opened his p hand, and the little bird sailed away to freedom. I thought as he stood there of Archibald "utledge's article in the Atlantic Monthly of a year or two back in which he expatiated upon the extraordinary kinship that exists between his man, "rince, and the animals on his plantation of "ampton on the "antee.

As I drank my first cup of coffee, Frank and I talked of birds and as he gave me a cigarette for my second cup of coffee, I remarked how well he looked in his pale blue shirt that somehow perfectly complemented his pale chocolate color. Lots of things had happened during the past twenty four hours that weighed on Frank's heart. He hadn't breathed a word about it to me, nor did I refer to the matter in speaking to him, but that's the grand thing about Frank,--both of us sensed that the other realized what rested heavily on the one as we talked of birds, Grandpa and other extraneous matters as though the insignificant subjects we touched upon were but a lovely, though effective garland of roses which were sufficient in themselves to conceal the thorns beneath the sometimes ~~permeable~~ pierced the heart.



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April 28th - Sat. cont.

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Before six, Grandpa and I were back at our maisonette, having breakfast, after which I got down to the mail and my Journal, which went deplorably a-gog, as interruptions with out end followed along in quick succession, and I shudder when I think how horribly I jumbled it will read if ever anyone undertakes it.

At ten Mrs. Brandon came over for coffee, with Aunt Ammie following shortly afterward. For a change, we talked of Wachez. Mrs. Brandon says she will send us Ydnot's SLAVERY IN MISSISSIPPI which she finds excellent. It was to B.L.V. "Ailes Diary that Ydnot turned for a large part of the material in this book, Mrs. Brandon said.

He also spoke of her need to read the Affleck Diary, now in L.S.U., before she completes her history of "Sixty" Washington, Miss. Sometimes the University seems loath to let one read some of their choicer manuscripts, but Mrs. Brandon is planning to go to Baton Rouge after her visit next week in Alexandria, and so try to look over the Affleck Diary at that time. Aunt Ammie says that if she is unsuccessful, Mrs. Brandon must let her know, and Aunt Ammie will bring out her heavy artillery on the matter. One way or the other, Mrs. Brandon is going to see the Affleck Diary,--of that I am convinced. She says she feels she must hurry along with her work, however, as she is now seventy-six years old, and the time left for her to accomplish it may be limited. She says that in the event she dies before it is completed, she is leaving her manuscript to Mrs. Moore for completion.

After dinner and afterwards the mail, including a hilarious letter from Bobina and twenty photographs from the library of Congress covering various interiors and exteriors of Belle Grove,--a duplicate in part of material already assembled. Mrs. Brandon had known the Stone Wares who owned Belle Grove, having played with the little "ares when she was a child. She said the children used to call Stone, "China" as a nickname. It seems he was named after his mother's father, the famous "rl Stone of Louisiana, and it is possible the family didn't realize at the time he was christened that his full name would so much suggest a piece of pottery.

I believe I should record that the wife, some 22 years old, of one of the boys who went to jail a couple of weeks back, died late yesterday, leaving a child a day old. Her husband, after leaving the jail in town went to New Orleans. They telephoned him yesterday but he will not come down for the funeral which will be held today. Elle etait la fille illegitime de mon domestique bine-aime.

Mrs. Brandon spent the afternoon with me, during a instructive time as a sitting as one could wish. He also read to me of Dunlap and Claypool, the Philadelphia printers who struck off the first copies of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, etc. We also spoke of Aunt Ammie and the promise Gondol, the architect, had made to her that he would procure the copy of the other part of the Macgruder Diary through pull at L.S.U. In the mean time with Ross, the writer, had arrived to chat with Aunt Ammie, and so the afternoon ran out.

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April 28th - concluded.

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Supper, and we all talked afterwards at the table, turning through old documents which Gondol had rescued from the Wachez town hall when a part of the building was burned, and the City Fathers were having the "rubbish" cleaned up and burned. These documents included official proclamations dated 1787, as issued by the Commander of the town, a group of legal papers,--manumissions, marriage certificates, deeds to property, etc., many of which were for the year of 1841. It was interesting to note the name of a Miss Brevelle, from whose family, no doubt, the name Isle Brevelle was taken for this section along Cane River that runs from about here up to Bermuda.

At eight we said goodnight, and Grandpa and I came over to Lyle's house to sleep. I sat comfortably on the great sofa and enjoyed my coco-cola, turning over in my mind a lot of facts and gossip, including those three women of the Wachez region, Mesdames Marshall, "eer, the name eludes me momentarily, all of whom had had mulatto children during the past years since ante-bellum days.

I awoke at 11:30, feeling perfectly refreshed for my little nap and so was in bed before midnight. BTF



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28  
"pril 29th - "unday.

I didn't awaken until nearly five o'clock this morning, and it was nearly daylight when Grandpa and I took our little constitutional on the front gallery. Back to bed, and by five-thirty, Frank had arrived to help me get my day started right, with a couple of cups of black Louisiana coffee and some conversation which always does my heart good.

He left Lyle's to go over to start a little fire in my house for me, and I followed shortly afterward, as soon as I could scramble into my clothes and get Grandpa under way. When I arrived at my maisonette, I found Frank as busy as Grandpa might have been if he had gotten there first. Swarms of swallows had come down through the chimney, and dozens of them were whirling around the place. Frank caught handfuls of them and while gathering up those on the gallery or balcony which divides half the upper story of the house in two, he passed them to me, and I released them in handfuls from the door. Grandpa mean time was going crazy.

"e finally got them all out, but it was obvious that they had been imprisoned too long in the place, and I accordingly decided to have my breakfast in Lyle's house, so back there Grandpa and I traveled, with Frank arriving shortly thereafter with breakfast.

I worked a little on my machine before Mrs. Brandon arrived. "e had a delightful conversation, and she read to me from the Mississippi "istorical "ecord from an article by "ydor on Andrew Marshall, supplementing the reading with many a digression on thumb-sketches of Marshall's contemporaries. She did an excellent one on old "ohn "enderson whose volume on the unreasonableness of Payne's "ge of "eason was probably the first book ever printed in Mississippi. I was enchanted to learn so much about old "r. "enderson and to learn that "rs. "ambain's aunt, "iss "orinne "enderson of Melmont has this volume. I shall certainly make it a point to call on Mrs. "yres and her "ister, Miss "enderson, while I am in "atchez next week.

"unt "ammie came over for coffee, bringing me a marvelous big bud of the magnolia grandiflora and some lovely flowering branches of the tulip poplar. We had a good chat, all three of us, during coffee. "e talked some of the Stanton girls of "indy Hill, and "rs. "randon laughed at how Miss "izabeth always disdained her. Once when about to present some distinguished ladies to "iss "izabeth, "rs. "randon had to explain who she herself might be. "llen or Nellie "randon", she remarked. Miss "izabeth still looked dumb. "Mrs. "randon tried again: "Why I'm Nellie "randon, "harlies widow." Miss "izabeth began more regal instantly, and responded: "hat's honor enough and then received the Pilgrims. It would appear that "izabeth is entranced with her own genealogy, which is about the same as "harles "randon,--at least it is the "randons through whom Miss "izabeth tricks out her claims to be ing a Daughter of the Crown. It is possible that being so concerned with her own fine

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"pril 29th - "unday.- page 2.

fine feathers in her family avis rara, she never did realize that in the "atchez region set up, the "ailes name which Mrs. "randon brought to her husband's name was just about as brilliant as anything which "iss "izabeth could ever imagine for her "randon strain.

We spoke of the "inchester house, a slipping old mansion one finds not far from "rlington, although to reach the place one continues not down mainstreet, but down "ommochneta "treet, until one is opposite "unleith, where one turns to the left and crosses a bbayou. "rignially this must have been a sumptuously finished house. One may still see the gold leaf about the woodwork of the windows, "rs. "randon says.

"rs. "randon also spoke of the Diary of "r. "ush Nutt, which at present, she understnds is in the possession of the "atchez "race "ommission, of which "unt "ammie's friend, "rs. "eane "lemming "urns,--Mrs. "erriday Byrnes, is president. As Dr. Nutt, the builder of "ongwood, was a man of exceptional versatility in his interests, and eminently successful in his role of "lanter, it would seem likely that his "iary might be entertaining and valuable. I reckon "unt "ammie will be communicating with her friend about this item shortly.

The dinner bell and we all went over to the big house, but I lingered on the way to talk with Frank and Davis who were just finished placing a screen on the top of the chimney of my maisonette so that tonight there will not be so many swallows inside my house.

After dinner, Mrs. Brandon returned to read to me from the Miss. Hist. Journal, and later we discussed old Plantation houses near Natchez,--the "outh place behind Arlington, and "unleith,--not the "apernter house in town but the lovely old place behind Propinquity, which Mrs. Brandon,--nee "oguette, had given her son James when he married Anne "rcher. The lovely old brick structure has started tumbling down, and I suppose will shortly have disappeared.

Frank served coffee at three, having retu ned from the funeral.

"e supped at five, and in the evening talked of "ashington, "iss in "unt "ammie's room, until eight when we said goodnight.



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April 20th - Monday.

I slept soundly last night, not even enjoying for a little while that delicious music of rain as it fell in torrents during the night.

Frank arrived at five thirty, characteristically starting off a new day with a smile as always. I was glad that the memory of yesterday's race had so smoothly into the background of memory, although one never knows, of course, what sorrows great and small lie behind that placid morning smile.

A little after six, Grandpa and I had had our Breakfast at our house, and shortly afterward I had bathed, shaved and dressed. Frank said that Miss Celeste was ready to start for Washington, La., and was awaiting us. I accordingly joined them in the garden by the side gate,--Celeste and her mother, while Mrs. Brandon and Aunt Mammie joined us shortly afterward.

The sun was bright, with all the foliage sparkling with vivid rain soaked greenery, as we threaded the winding road along Cane River, and so on to the big road at Merry.

Within an hour we were at Alexandria, where we drove Mrs. Brandon to the home she was to visit for a few days at 2350 Hill Street. She was sweet in saying goodbye, referring to her visit at Elrose as an oasis where she found inspiration and solace among kindred souls whose minds and senses of value traveled along so perfectly with her own. Child of two of the great "atchez families, the Wailles and Covingtons, poor Mrs. Brandon was born in 1864, and so found upon her shoulders all the burdens that a war and changing economic and social revolutions put upon the children of those who had during the preceding half century been the great intellectual and financial leaders of America's greatest civilization. Battling against poverty from the beginning, while still the aura of wealth and social position shown from a departing glory of her immediate predecessors, Mrs. Brandon has struggled through these years and eons of endeavor, and still at 76 she reflects the mental vigor, in spite of physical handicaps of poor health and straightened circumstances, all the precious qualities of gentility which we associate with those who, like her forebearers possessed as they set the tone for an era of which America can point with the greatest pride.

From Alexandria we continued,--the four of us--toward the south and west to Washington where I called on Mr. Leon Lastrape in regard to an attic full of ante-bellum books which lay languish in the attic of the old 1801 house of Lastrape at some distance below Washington on the road to Opelousas road. I found Mr. Lastrape ill in bed with influenza, and so all hope of looking over his collection of books had to be foregone for this visit. We then visited Mrs. Lynche's antique shop where I was impressed by the extent of her old furniture, much of which was good, the poor quality of her glass and china, and the altitude of her prices which might have had some excuse in New York where rents are exorbitant and transportation charges are to be considered, but surely in Washington, Louisiana, these prices are entirely out of line.

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29  
April 20th - con.

Long before we had reached Washington, the rain had started falling in torrents. It kept up during our stay, and it was a question of dashing in and out of the car at the little restaurant where we ate to avoid getting soaked. Our dinner was simple but generous, with accent of bread, rice, roast beef, vegetables, etc. It was priced at twenty-five cents a person.

After one o'clock, with the sky still dissolving in torrents, we ran around to the catholic church to call on some priest or other that Celeste and Mrs. Rigard had known. The priest wasn't at home, but in spite of the downpour, we did dash into the curiously turreted church itself, and were enchanted with the beauty of this beautiful interior, hidden away here in this half forgotten little town of old Louisiana. The white altar, some how lighted with a pale rose light was particularly lovely as was the classically arched ceiling that ran from front to back of the church.

Back in the car, we plunged through the down-pour, back to Alexandria, where we stopped at another antique place, Mr. Wilber or something of the sort. Obviously the boy appreciated lovely pieces, and the few he had on display were all equally lovely.

Heading homeward, it was good to notice the lifting clouds and before reaching Monet's Ferry the sun was shining brightly.

We were home at five, I had supper at five thirty, and so to Aunt Mammie's room to go over the mail with nice clippings from New York, letters from the "Historic Buildings Survey and photographs from Hobbs, including one of a church which Aunt Mammie had taken. I laughed at both of us when we noted for the first time that this church, which has always stood in the depths of a wood, had a clock on its tower,--and that neither of us had ever noticed it before although it was a big as life.

A little after seven the heavens opened up again and the deluge resumed. We talked until eight of "atchez, and then said goodnight.

I waded over to Myle's for the gardens had vast pools of water an inch or two deep, and so retired to sleep until eleven when Grandpa joined me. BTF



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April 30th - Tuesday.

I certainly have the month of April hopelessly confused so far as the dating of this Journal goes. At this moment, I do know that April ended on Tuesday, and as there are thirty days in the month, I reckon this date line must be correct, although I presume it may be the only one that is correct as I have jotted them down.

I awoke at four thirty this morning, but as the clouds were still all a-drip, I turned over and went back to sleep, giving up all thought of a walk.

I slept so soundly that Frank came with coffee and left without me ever awakening. When I did finally awake, he had just arrived with my breakfast tray, giggling the while that he had successfully eluded me on his earlier trip.

Aunt Cammie came over to Lyle's house early, for I had had my breakfast there, what with the re-doing of my maisonette after it had so unexpectedly been transformed by the chimney sweeps on Saturday night into a glorified bird sanctuary.

We ran over some notes she had made while we were in the Pine Ridge-Church Hill neighborhood. I liked transcribing some of the tombstone inscriptions a lot. I particularly liked one that began: "Sacred to the memory of ~~xxxxxx~~ Issac Dunbar, born in 1791 who lies buried on the same place he was born". This was from the Oakley Grove plantation, but what his mother could have been doing in that grave at the time of her son's birth I cannot imagine.

Noon, and nice letters and clippings, followed by an afternoon spent at my typewriter. Aunt Cammie had expected to go over

some Macgruder notes with me but a bevy of callers dissipated the whole time, so that we didn't see each other until supper. After supper we read from The Hudson River by the man who wrote Stars Fell On Alabama and later Listen For The Lonesome Drum, but whose name I can't think of for the life of me.

At eight we said good night, after many a chuckle over the account of the eight sided houses of Orson Fowler, and considerable talk about Natchez. It was dark outside, same for the occasional flash of lightening which followed for hours in regular cadence on the heels of each roll of thunder. The night was warm, almost hot, and excessively humid. I couldn't find Grampa at my house, and so I came along over to Lyle's, had a hot bath, and sat for a little while drinking a coco-cola and smoking a cigarette, clothed only in my shorts, as I pondered much upon real estate values in Mississippi. BTf.

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May 1st, - Wednesday. 1940

Lots of blue sky and sunshine this morning, a really delightful change after so much rain ~~xx~~ of the past few days and the incessant cannonading of the thunder all last night.

Frank arrived at five thirty. He poured my coffee and lighted my cigarette for me. I promptly dropped the latter "plumb" into the coffee. I reckon I didn't sleep as soundly as I might have last night.

Before seven I had bathed, shaved and breakfasted, and was in the big road. I walked as far as Montrose where a man, getting gas at the garage there, came over and asked me if I wouldn't like to ride to town. He was accompanied by his daughter and a girl friend of hers. They all seemed to know me. I had never seen any of them. I returned to Montrose by train, and so was back home about ten o'clock where I had coffee with Aunt Cammie in Lyle's house. During my absence Sam Brown or somebody under Aunt Cammie's direction had turned my maisonette inside out, and in consequence it was spankingly fresh and a little dampish, so I staid over at Lyle's to get out my mail, which didn't amount to much.

Dinner and the mail, with letters from Mr. Dabillion saying the iris didn't do so well in Lafayette this year, thanks to the winds and rains, and a letter from L.S.U. saying they didn't have the Macgruder Diary which, I reckon, is not true.

There was a clipping from Robina saying that Mr. Davis of L.S.U. is going to work on a several volume editing job of the mulatto Diary which Sally Johnson sold L.S.U. That surely would be better accomplished by someone like Mrs. Brandon who knows all the people in that diary, like 1,2,3.

I worked all afternoon at my machine, avoiding the two different beves of people who streamed through the gardens. I passed up Beth Williams, not recognizing her, much to my sorrow, for I wanted to speak with her about her house.

Aunt Cammie and I had hoped to work on Diary a little together, but we never did see each other until supper time. Afterward we read David Cohen's article on Natchez in the Jan. 1940 Atlantic. It was good half way through but rather petered out at the end. He made a couple of mistakes in his history, such as having Audubon teach at Jefferson College, Washington, Miss., for Audubon taught only at Elizabeth Female Academy in Washington. There were a couple of other minor errors. I liked what he quoted from H.L. Menken regarding the "manifold excellences of Southern ante-bellum civilization". Somewhere in the Cohen article we ran across the reference to "Chanel oppiests", and we spoke again of Madam Olympe, the famous New Orleans couturiere, who each year provided a veil for the Widow Mumfort, who paraded the streets of the town each year in her bridal finery, after she had lost her mind when her husband had been hanged before the New Orleans Mint from which he had taken down the Stars and Stripes and run up the Stars and Bars during the Yankee occupation.

Eight o'clock, ice cream, and then goodnight and sleep.



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May 2nd - Thursday.

Cool and beautiful, with a calm that is almost disturbing. Frank arrived at 5:30. His heart is heavy, obviously. I reckon it is kinder not to remark upon it. I only wish I might be able to do something about it. There is something so dreadfully poignant when a person with a great heart is sad. Somehow disagreeable people don't seem particularly able to disturbed the basic forces of the universe but when kindly people are dpressed it seems as though their very depression acts a a sensitive seismograph recording a cosmic disturbance that is beyond the powers that be to alter and to repair.

6:15 and breakfast was finished, and I had started work on my typewriter. Aunt Cammie came over early and we spoke at length of people who get blue ribbons for taking care of other people's business. It would appear that I took today's prize in this field. I propose to hurry Mrs. Brandon along in the completion of her History of Washington, Mississippi, so it may be used as a basis for a grant from some fund, like the Rosenwald, for say a thousand dollars or possibly two thousand, which would enable her to devote her entire time to editing the B.D.C. Wailes Diary. Now in her 76th year, she is the only living person who knew directly or from her father and mother indirectly all the people who figured in this remarkable manuscript, and with her editing,--that is, her notations as to the people, circumstances, etc., etc., as recorded in the Diary, the world would have an understanding which would be more complete and illuminating than would ever be possible, if Mrs. Brandon were to die before this work were completed. Aunt Cammie and I decided that I had better write her at once, suggesting that it would be wise to complete the History of Washington as early as possible so that the grant might accordingly be applied for. I do hope we can engineer this allotment for Mrs. Brandon's sake and for the better understanding of the South's greatest Diary, if she is actually able to edit it.

I got off a flock of letters before twelve, and posted them before the mail had gone. Celeste and her mother came to dinner at Aunt Cammie's invitation, as J. H. was in New Orleans.

Then came the mail, with a lovely letter from Mrs. Brandon and an equally nice note from Mary Lambdin which had been long en route, having gone to Wilson, La., before coming to Melrose. Mary said in her letter that Aunt Nellie,--Mrs. Ayres of Melmont was looking up family records for me. I hope she finds some about the Prince.

At two Aunt Cammie came over to Lyle's house, and together we wrote a letter for Dr. Scruggs to sign regarding his fathers guest at Cloutierville whom Mrs. Stowe was writing Uncle Tom's Cabin. We also wrote to Lyman Beecher Stowe, thanking him for a letter he enclose from Forest Wilson who is now working on a life of Harriet Beecher Stowe. Mrs. Stowe, according to Mr. Wilson, never was in Louisiana. Aunt Cammie has different ideas on that point.

Only three of us for supper,--Aunt Cammie, Eugene and I.

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May 2nd - concluded.

After supper Aunt Cammie made a little tour of the front gardens to plan what Bluff, Sam, Bud and Mat would do on the morrow. For one thing the bamboo is being cut out,--all the dead stalks, for it seems the February cold spell worked havoc with these plants, although never before had they suffered. Some of the canes were 18 or 20 feet tall, and I was duely impressed when Aunt Cammie pointed out that bamboo,--or branboo, as Sam insists on calling it, sometimes grows as much a thirty feet in a single month. I reckon people who are unacquainted with this remarkable horticultural phenomenon would be skeptical of such an unusual expansion.

We read for a while from Sydnor's B.L. C. Wailes. Frank dropped by for a few moments a little after seven to say goodnight. When he arrived we heard the sheep bleating from the yard down the lane. They have just been g shorn, and Frank said the wool yeild was unusually good this year. It seems that in sheering, they are careful to keep the wool from the males and females in separate groups as the wool of one--I didn't learn which--is far superior to that of the other. I also learned for the first time that the meat of the male is quite different from the female. Never a day closes that I don't realize how much there is to know in this world and how little I have learned.

We said goondight at eight and I came over to Lyle's house alone, for I couldn't find Grandpa. And so after a hot bath I feel asleep before eight thirty.



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May 3rd, - Friday.

Another perfect dawn,--all blue and gold.

Five fifteen and Frank, with a smile on his face that doesn't conceal the pain in his heart.

I lingered long at breakfast to get caught up on my radio news which I had missed consistently for the past few days. Aside from strange sounding names of towns in Norway of which I had never heard, and the bombing of this place and that by German air forces, I learned little. Perhaps it was enough to be told the old, old story that man still is making a Hell out of the Heaven God gave him.

I worked on mail until nine o'clock when Aunt Cammie came over to Lyle's and we plunged into the task of unraveling the geneologies of the Macgruders and Buttons that had so much to do with Eliza's Diary. Aunt Cammie had already made her rounds, outlining the household duties that awaited Rita, McKinley, etc., conferred with Henry on weaving and book-binding, and then put Sam Brown, Bluff and Budd Williams to cutting out cane and extraneous plants and vines in the front gardens and labored with Elmer in the back ones. It appeared that Aunt Cammie could therefore take up her work with me undisturbed, and I must say that concentration of thought helps out in straightening out complicated geneologies.

But we hadn't progressed far before a servant called to say that Western Union was on the wire. Aunt Cammie went over to the Big House, returning immediately. It was Mary Lambdin of Edgewood, wiring she would be here Monday.

We continued our labors, but again someone appeared with a message. It seems one Robert Hicks of Watchitoches, an oil truck driver, wanted to speak with Aunt Cammie. She dropped everything and went.

It seems that this youth, although bereft of much education, has always wanted to write. He had of course heard all about Aunt Cammie, had been dying to speak with her one day, but never before until at this moment when he found himself on his oil truck in front of Melrose, did he ever have the courage to ask if he might speak with her.

He confessed that he had a page or two of his verses about the Indian Princess who jumped from the Bluffs of Grand Ecore with him. Aunt Cammie said she would be delighted to hear them. He was shy, but equally delighted to read them. Aunt Cammie found them lacking in some virtues but creative in the picture they made. She told him she had some material in her library on the same subject. He was enchanted, for he hadn't know this story had ever been set down. She asked him to the library, but he stopped short on entering, explaining that he knew there must be oil on his shoes and that would ruin the rug. Aunt Cammie's come back was typical:

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"For Heaven's sake, I had never before thought of the value of a rug, except as something to walk on. Don't pay any attention to it".

But young Mr. Hicks did his best to stay on the brick floor while he ran through the articles hurriedly.

He confided that he knew he couldn't write and that none of his things would never be published, but that he wanted to write so badly that he felt it might be worth while, even though he did so badly, for there was always a chance that when he had grown old and died, his children might run across some of his things in his papers, and like them.

It goes without saying that Aunt Cammie gave him encouragement, and suggested that he come back when he had more time to explore the Library at his leisure. Obviously he was floored by her kindness and interest in his aspirations.

He accordingly left with a much gayier spirit than he had entered. Aunt Cammie, as he left, remarked to me: "One of these days, Mr. Hicks will be invited to dinner at Melrose. Then he will have lots of time to get acquainted and look over what he wants in the library".

And in this half hour which had taken her from our geneology work, Aunt Cammie had demonstrated once more what a truly great lady she is. A truck driver who wants to write poetry, and a great lady who will invite him to dine at Melrose. How rich life is when one has Aunt Cammie's concept of success: "Helping another to make his dream come true".

Dinner with much conversation about the war games now being held in this neighborhood, and some mention of antiques. Dan asked his mother to telephone Mrs. Lynche in Washington to save the clock with the glass dome which we had seen there on Monday. Dessert and the mail, with a lovely letter from Miss Lulu Shields of Church Hill, Miss and a package from Mr. Dabillion of Lafayette, it being a copy of Bartrams TRAVELS,--which he had sent to Aunt Cammie because his late wife had been so fond of it. It is odd that he should choose this particular volume, since it is one we have searched for in the old and rare shops for the past year.

We worked at Lyle's house after dinner until nearly three, when Sister came, and among other things asked me to talk with Harry whom she says appropriates food from her kitchen without asking her permission. She felt I could make more of an impression upon the child because she says he is so fond of me. I did talk with Harry, but I imagine I handled the matter rather differently from what may have been expected.

Before the Winks left, some ladies appeared from town to see



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May 3rd Friday - cont. page 3.

to see the gardens, etc., etc. Joe arrived at the same time to read for a bit to me, and so when we had done I walked out with him, leavin' him at the garage to get a coco-cola, while I continued to Cane River bridge which I crossed, and turning to the left, made my way in the hot sunshine to Felix Laurenz's house for a haircut. I talked with Whang for a few moments, and then Feral came in from somewhere wearing a sun bonnet,--the first I had seen this year. Pearl is Franks sister, and is about the same luscious chocolate color, and the white sunbonnet became her exceedingly. Felix arrived shortly afterward, and together the three of us sat on the gallery and talked while Felix cut my hair.

I must again remark what advantage Felix front gallery, draped in roses and fronting on a little paling enclosed garden of sweet smelling lilies has over the most new fangled barbershop in an great city I ever knew.

We talked Cane River gossip, the death of the 208 negroes in the Hatcher fire last week and a hundred and one other subjects. Pearl through out a feeler as to the whereabouts of her nephew. I didn't know where he might be, but I lied like a trooper and swore he was working at Melrose.

And so back home a little before six where I found Aunt Cammie training a horse on some newly planted shrubs, as she directed Sam, Bluff and Bud as to what to do next.

Supper and a little tour of the gardens and more watering of plants, after which Aunt Cammie picked me some lovely magnolias which for some reason were the first I had ever seen in full bloom. They were about 8 or 10 inches across and exhaled a perfume that was marvelous. I put them in a silver vase on the little console beside my bed, fed Grandpa and so returned to the Big House where we read of "Proximity" and the "Vivingtons" who tie up with the characters in our Diary of Eliza.

At eight I said goodnight, looked for Grandpa but couldn't find him at my maisonette, and so over to Lyle's where I had a hot bath, considered much of what I had thought about during the day, solved the sorrow that had ridden like a little cloud on the horizon when I awoke this morning, and so at ten o'clock to sleep.  
BTF

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May 4th - Saturday.

I awoke at four. It was pleasant to find Grandpa scratching at the screen door. We took a little walk up and down the cool brick pavement on the front gallery. Then we both lay down again in the great four poster, with Grandpa going to sleep shortly while I indulged in that unique pleasure of man,--watching the night slowly dissolve into day.

Frank arrived a little after five. I was enchanted that his smile revealed solace. I so much hope that it may be that way always, and yet, with Fate riding as she does, I cannot help but fear for other distracted smiles.

Breakfast and at work on my machine before seven, and so through the morning until ten when Aunt Cammie came to take coffee with me. Before we were finished, however, some people came and we both had to relinquish all thoughts of mail for a while. One of the women who lives in this region and has a lovely place was speaking of another "Cane River" resident,--a man who had married a woman with some property, which was quite a new sensation for the husband. It seems he proceeded to spend it as fast as he could and for one thing went over to some blooded stable in Texas where inquired prices on stallions. He priced the horses with abandon and finally came to one inexpensively priced at six hundred and fifty dollars. He said he would take that one. He then returned to Cane River, got his truck and drove back to Texas for his horse. When he tried to load the horse, however, the animal wouldn't budge. Then it was that the owner explained that the reason he had sold the horse at such a low figure was because the horse would go nowhere that a pet goat on the place wouldn't go. The buyer asked the price of the goat which the stable owner said would cost twenty five dollars. This price was paid, the goat trotted out, and on mounting the truck, the horse followed after. Now the man has the horse on Cane River,--together with the goat. The horse still refuses to move anywhere without the goat, and Heaven alone knows what will happen when the goat dies. If I were the present owner of the horse and goat combination, I reckon I would try to sell it to the "Cane River" team at Goat Castle, for I imagine they might to something with such a set-up, although it would be a little disquieting if "Cane", in accordance with his custom, should let the goat sleep in his bed and the horse started to follow suit.

Dinner with a card from "Obina" saying she was coming down. Afternoon and Aunt Cammie was superintending the trimming of the great live-oak in the front garden. Fany is her prize tree climber, and together they tore out plenty of little branches from the big trees and no end of vines, wisteria, etc., from elsewhere.

Almer came by for her order on the week's work she had done at hoeing. She had worked two days. Her salary was one dollar. She looked gay, in a pink and white striped dress,--some light fabric that was starched to a standstill. She had on a really smart pan-cake hat of white with little pink flowers at the back.

Poor Almer,--three children to support besides herself, and she was going to the dentist to give him a dollar to pull a tooth. I should certainly like to know how she makes both ends meet.



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May 4th - Saturday.

I worked until four, when Puny arrived with a great bouquet of magnolias which the Madam had had him cut and bring to me. I put them in a silver vase, and with amazing rapidity they opened their great snow white petals, spreading some 12 inches across their chalice and filling my maisonette with a fragrance that was as subtle as it was sweet.

Five thirty, and Robina arrived in time for supper. It was good to see her and pick up conversation from where we had dropped it a couple of weeks back. After supper, Aunt Ammie watered flowers and set out some plants which Robina had brought and had hoped to surprise her with, having in mind a little party for tomorrow when she and the Madam and Frank and I would do a little ice cream and cake and present exchanging. The flowers had been the main stay for an excuse for the party, but something else can be rigged up if an excuse is needed, I reckon.

At seven, as darkness was settling down, we drove to town to see the floats on Cane River, facing Front Street in Natchitoches, where a presentation of tableaux depicting the scene of the founding of that place in 1718 by St. Denis and the French. The floats were on rafts, towed by a small speed boat, and the costumes were brilliantly lighted from flood lights. A negro chorus, stationed on the bridge in the center of the town, sang more or less appropriate songs which were diffused by a public address system. I reckon an Indian war-whoop might have been as appropriate if one were carrying out the historic scene with preciseness, but the negro voices were much more pleasant even though slightly anachronistic.

Back home about ten, with a little bite to eat before finishing all the talk we always seem to have on hand when the three of us are together. I don't know if lemon meringue pie and coca-cola is the most conducive thing for sleep but that's what we ate, and within half an hour I was in Lyle's house and deep in dreamland.

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May 6th - Sunday.

I awoke a little before five, with Grandpa, who had let himself out sometime during the night, clamoring at the screen door to get back in. I acquiesced, and thought of napping a little until Frank came, but Grandpa was soon on my feet and performing as though he were working the treadles of a pipe organ, so the Snadman got nowhere with me.

With coffee, Frank and I talked of the little party that Robina, Aunt Ammie and he and I had planned for today. Frank wondered what he could get as a fit for "The Madam". Then he hazarded the guess that it might be nice to get a pair of stockings from the store and do them up nicely and present them to her. We both chuckled at this suggestion, since the Madam owned the store and the stockings would go on her bill anyway. It didn't take us long to conclude that such a gift would be perfect and so Frank left me giggling all over.

Bath and breakfast in my maisonette, and a little after seven Robina called. I was frankly surprised to see her at that hour, as she declared that at Melrose she always "sleeps two rows at a time". It seems that the great moving spirit of this morning was the fact that Aunt Ammie's first born had telephoned from town saying that he would arrive shortly, and Robina accordingly wanted to absent herself so that Aunt Ammie could receive her son alone. He is down from Washington, attending part of the War Games which the Army is staging in this area.

We had a good morning together, Robina and I, with little visits from time to time from Aunt Ammie who dashed over to my house and back again.

After coffee, Robina and I took to the big road, runing up to Natchez, La., in hopes of finding Friedman's plantation store open where we thought we might find some gifts for our party. But the place was closed, and so we drove over to Bermuda, stopping at Beth Williams' loutiers to say hello. This is the place that is opposite from the old home of the youth in Lyle's Old Louisiana who wrote the diary. We crossed the Bridge at Bermuda, and so sauntered down to Melrose, and then re-crossed Cane River and stopped at Felix and Pearl's so Robina could see the charming little flower garden. Felix and Pearl were on the front gallery and a funny little priest who turned out to be Father Pixley who is one of the trio or quartet who preside over the altar of the church, hard by the convent next to Felix's house. We talked flowers a bit, and Father Pixley after meeting us, jumped into a big car that stood beside the house and went sailing around the little property like a child, too full of zest, who simply had to show off.

And so back to Melrose and to dinner which was good in food and fair in conversation, in spite of the cloud on such departments whenever family reunions are in operation.



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May 5th - Sunday, concluded.

After dinner, Francis came over to my house as did Robina, and together we talked "atches, furniture and whatnot. Sister came to drag "races out but I contrived to keep her a while for sheer obstinacy.

At coffee time we had hoped to have our little party, and Aunt "ammie and Frank arrived to join "obina and me, but Sister blew in, putting to flight our hopes of a gay half hour.

Supper followed, but we had eaten so much ice cream I wasn't very hungry. At six thirty, after "obina and I had retired to Lyle's house to let the family have one more last inning, and Joe said it was time to leave for the school where he and the other little colored children were going to speak in their season's closing exercises. We couldn't leave at that moment but we assured him we would try to be there by 7:30 when the programme was scheduled to start. We ~~xxxxxxx~~

Shortly after "oe had gone, Aunt Cammie came over to Lyle's and said we were at last alone, and so with Frank we went over to my house where we all exchanged gifts and were as merry as possible after hope had been so long deferred.

Then "obina and I started out in her car for the school which is about three miles away. We thought we would be late, but when we approached, we discovered that loiterers were half concealing themselves in the hedgerows and unattached males were standing about the steps of the school. Robina noted that not a window in the place was open,--a detail that filled her with mis-givings, for it had been a hot day. We waited until about 8:2-, and as there was no sign of anything starting within the immediate future, I sought for Joe to tell him we would not be able to wait any longer. Unfortunately I couldn't find him, but I did see McKinley and "elix, and I asked them to tell "oe we couldn't wait.

Back home, and we found Aunt "ammie awaiting us in her room. We chatted for an hour before saying goodnight. I couldn't find Grandpa at my house, and so I went over to Lyle's house alone, bathed leisurely, had a cigarette and a drink and so to bed.

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May 6th - Monday.

Another perfect dawn, with all creation contriving to make the day more beautiful than any preceeding,--and yet from Frank's smile, I can tell that last week's problem was solved only to give way to another,--although neither of us referred to the matter.

"obina was ready to leave for "hrevport a little before seven, and I accordingly joined her and Aunt "ammie at the "it while Frank was putting in some of the last minute little articles which Aunt "ammie was sending along.

Aunt "ammie look d tired, and even though she said she slept well, I instinctively felt it was more of an assurance for "obina than a statement of exactitude.

It was glorious to ride through the early morning sunshine with "obina, and together we talked all the way to town and on beyond ~~xxxx~~ for a little way. She was good enough to offer to take me back to town, when I decided I had better say au revoir, but we both laughed when I pointed out that it was my original intention to walk this morning, and for that reason had consented to ride part way with her.

And so we waved goodbye, and I headed back toward town where I fiddled about for a bit and then around nine thirty, headed out the concrete pavement toward home. Along the route I met the "ohen boy whose father is operating the "ertzog plantation,--to Cohen advantage, folks declare,--and together we chatted, each of us hoping that some one known to one or the other of us might pass so that we might be home before noon. Luck was with us, for of all people, "anet happened along, and stopped for us. We both left the car at Montrose, had a coco-cola, and I headed up the lane toward "elrose where I arrived before eleven.

I found some people in the front garden, obviously sight-seers, who said they were from "uston,--wherever that may be,--and that one of them had once met "rs. Henry, and that they would all be glad to speak with her. I told them I would see what I could do. But Aunt "ammie, I found, was asleep in Lyle's cabin,--and I was enchanted to realize that she was thus getting caught up a little on last night's lack of sleep, and so I chatted with the visitors a little and then sent them on their way.

Dinner, with Aunt "ammie awakening at the sound of the Plantation bell, and after dinner the mail, including a lovely enclosure from "anhattan in anticipation of my birthday. I wonder if the sender knows how much this means to me.

After much conversation with Aunt "ammie about those we love, I sequestered myself in my maisonette to contemplate and praise God for people who shine so magnificently in His likeness.

Two-thirty and time for coffee. I had expected Aunt "ammie to come over to my house, but I gathered from the conversation I could hear floating from the back gallery that she already had



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Monday, - May 6th.

company. I gathered that it might be Beth Williams Cloutier who had told me yesterday that she would come down today to pick me up to go back to Bermuda with her to look at her lovely old house and advise as to what should be done with the last two rooms which she wants to begin restoring..

Once up stairs, however, I found that not only was Beth with Aunt Cammie but that Mary Ambdin had also arrived at the same time.

May said she had had spent quite a time in the road, having come from Natchez by way of Alexandria where she had hoped to have lunch with Carolyn Ormon. In this hope, however, she had been disappointed, since on her arrival in Alexandria she learned that Carolyn had left there on Friday to go to Briarwood, the Ormon home in the forest 50 miles above here where her sister was gravely ill. Mary accordingly headed toward Melrose, but found her progress considerably slowed down by the great numbers of troops and impediments attendant upon the War Games that are being staged about Alexandria.

After coffee and a supplementary round of coca-cola, we all decided to go down to Beth's together, and so spent a busy hour between four and five tearing her house to pieces and putting it together again.

And so back to Melrose and to supper, and afterward a little tour of the gardens to see some of the cypripedium and iris blossoms, and so to Lyle's for a little while to let the twilight settle down and listen to the amazing chorus of soloists from the birds in the surrounding gardens.

And so back to the big house where I volunteered to feed Heinze and Constorsity, but where I made of a mess of things, as the can was not the usual prepared food but salmon which I spilled all over the place,--including me.

And so I changed, and joined Aunt Cammie and Mary for an hour at the big house, talking diaries,--particularly Natchez ones, and much business about the Pine Ridge and Church Hill regions.

Eight thirty and we said good night, and again alone, for I couldn't find Grandpa, I went over to Lyle's for a hot bath and so to sleep.

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May 7th - Tuesday.

The dawn certainly arrives early these days, for it was almost daylight before four thirty this morning.

It was good to lie in the ultra-comfortable big four poster and watch the night recede and notice the magnolias, birdal-wreath and great ponderous lilies in the white garden slowly advance from indistinct shadows to strongly defined individualities

Frank arrive a little after five with coffee. I listlessly sipped it and smoked two cigarettes instead of one. I dallied in my bath and dressed leisurely, so that Frank had returned with my breakfast tray before I was completely dressed. Grandpa came with him and manifested vague interest in the aroma of bacon and the butter the eggs were scrambled in. I had in mind to share the bacon with him, but somehow he seemed only half interested in it and in no way ambitious enough to take a bite of it.

By ten o'clock I had rattled off quite a stack of mail, and I accordingly stretched my legs a bit and wondered over to the bindery where I found Henry teaching Mary how to weave, with Beth Williams Cloutier there watching and the Adam just arrived for coffee, too.

Afterwards, Beth came over to my house to further discuss her problems in doing over her library. The big difficulty seems to be in harmonizing mud walls and Empire furniture. I advised her to give up one or the other.

Dinner and afterwards the mail, with a letter from L.S.U. saying they didn't know of any Macgruder diary. What rogues those fellows are, although in this instance they may not even know who wrote the Macgruder diary, so I wrote them a line asking if they could have filed it under the name of one of the persons from whom they obtained fragments,--Hutton, Murray, etc.

Coffee time, and Mary came over to my maisonette for ~~her~~ ice cream. We talked of things Natchez, and spoke of the Dangerfield Plantation outside of Washington, Miss. where the present lady of the house made her husband flatten all the lovely old tombstones in the plantation cemetery and bury them because she didn't like marble monuments.

At four Aunt Cammie invited Mary and me to go down to Cloutierville. Mary, of course, accepted. I demurred. On their return Mary remarked to me that Sister was just like her mother,--didn't I think so. My response was as brief and negative as two letters could make it, but she pointed out that I didn't understand because when Sister grew up she would be just like her Mother. I bowed.

Supper with Stephen having returned from the War Games in Alexandria. Supper was good. Afterward Mary and I talked of Aunt Olivia until eight when we joined the Adam for a few moments before saying goodnight.



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May 9th - Thursday.

I awoke at four thirty, but went back to sleep just before Frank arrive, I guess, since I was conscious that he had been there and gone when I did away about a quarter of six.

Over to my house with Grandpa, and no sooner than I had stepped in than I discovered that Aunt Cammie sometime during the past evening had brought a beautiful bouquet of white lilies for my desk. A few moments later and Frank arrived with a big package for me. It had come from Zola a day or two back, and Aunt Cammie had held it aside until today. I undid it with dispatch, and found it to be my beloved sunflowers of van Gogh which Zola had copies for me, and had framed in white. I immediately hung it on my mud wall, and it looked grand. There was also an enclosure which I appreciated muchly.

And then came my breakfast, and Frank and I talked about birth days a bit, for as near as I can figure, this is his birthday, too, at least we played it was,--little matters and all that sort of things

And then I took to the big road, riding as far as Flora and around, where there were plenty of soldiers all over the road in participation of the current war games. And so eventually back to Montrose where I picked up a package which Robina had sent me,--some Sherry Wine, and so back up the lane toward Melrose. Along the route, I noticed several soldiers, their machine guns idle, lolling in the grass in the shade of some little trees. They were smoking and obviously having a fine time. They said hello, and I asked them how the war was going and they said everything was satisfactory so far. It looked that way to me.

And so back home to dash off a couple letters to Lyle and Zola and Robina, and then over to the big house for dinner. Among other things we had sherry, and it was marvelous, and the bottle was a glory in attractive decoration.

interruption - May 9th - continued.

The postman was kind to me today with nice letters and cards and packages from friends all around the country. It was good to run through the letters and other pieces of mail as I sipped the sherry and lingered over my demi-tasse. But Mary wanted to get started back by one o'clock, and so we broke off rather abruptly, regretfully said goodbye to Aunt Cammie whom I know I am going to miss during the next four or five days, not only for her companionship which means everything but also because she will not be along to share the lovely old plantations of 'atchez with me, and of course sharing plantations with her makes it a million times more worth while.

Along along the route we passed little groups of soldiers, with quite an imposing array of them at the bridge at Grand Core. There were hordes of camions in the roads, too, and a lot of hurrying and scurrying which for the most part seemed pretty senseless to the untutored,--I like untutored rather than untutored. In the first place I suppose war is about the stupidest thing man ever contrived, and I reckon it is only natural that W

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May 9th - Thursday--page 2.

and I reckon the War Games might easily seem about the second most curious thing that civilized man could conceive.

In the way over we talked much of people we know and I want to run the risk of recording a second time the story about Mrs. Charlie Compton which I may have set down before. Mrs. Charlie occasionally has streaks of balminess, and although she is rather harmless while enjoying such a flier into the fantastic she does become something of a matter of concern to her neighbors. She lives in 'atchez not far from the home of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Connor, and she has something of a fixation of Joe when her derangements come over her. One morning about dawn she startled the quiet of her street by issuing forth from her house gowned only in a long pink silk nightgown. As she made her progress, barefooted, along the sidewalk, she was heard to remark that Joe needed her at that moment and that she was going over to accodate him. Someone telephone Joe and his wife, and a rather pompous Dr., too, so that my the time Mrs. Charlies reached Joe's house, he was running out the back door and the Dr. and several neighbors were grouped about his front doorstep. About this moment Robert Dixon,--Joe Dixon and Dr. Francois Dixon's brother came along driving a horse and carriage having just taken some men to work. The rather pompous Dr. tried to persuade Mrs. Charlies to go back home, saying that Joe would rather she would wait for him at her house but Mrs. Charlies was adamant until she saw Robert appear. Then she announced that if Christ could straddle the back of an ass, she could sit beside one, and without further ado, she mounted beside the surprised Robert who drove her back to her house where she sat barefooted in her pink night gown on the swing on her front porch, and swung and swung all morning, singing the while in anticipation of Joe's call.

By five thirty, we had reached the Ferry and so were in town by six. We stopped for a moment at the garage where Jeff. Dixon came over to say hello to me. Mary, and it was thus that I had the honor of meeting this man who is trying to make such a circus out of the Devil's Punch Bowl, Fort Rosalie and Hite Apple Village,--all of which he has under lease at the moment. After saying goodbye, he got into his flaming red roadster and drove away. In town, we drove by the former nightclub where a week or ten days back 208 negroes had perished in a fire that swept the place. It was a low building, possibly 12 or 15 feet high, not as wide, I should judge as an average sized house, and not very long. The roof was entirely of tin as were the sides of this little building. It is astonishing that 500 people could have been in the building. The ceiling had been decorated with Spanish moss 8 or 10 months back and a gasoline spray had been blown on the moss to discourage the mosquitoes. A fan was blowing at the front end of dance floor when a match touched the moss. Almost instantly the room burst into a furnace, consuming many of the best servants in the town who had gathered for a special dance.

Because of the tin on the roof and the sides of the building, it didn't seem damaged, as all the general appearance of the building seemed intact. It is curious how such a horrible catastrophe could occur with so little evidence remaining to impress the casual observer.



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From town, we drove out "ine Street, beyond the ruins of lovely Edgewood where the gardens seem even more lovely with the fine camillas, magnolias, and other rare plants which had been so tastefully planted. Then on beyond "andsdown which old "avid "unt had built for another of his daughters just as he had build Edgewood for his daughter "atherine. "nd so along the lovely traces, now almost dark under the deep shadows of the great g trees that arched overhead. "nd so by the sweet little Pine "idge Presbyterian Church and Session House, and so on to Edgewood where we found "ittle "eff and Waldo sitting on the front gallery awaiting us.

By seven Mr. "ambdin had arrived and an exquisite supper, delightfully served, followed immediately.

"e chatted until ten, after which I bathed and shaved, and so folded up my beard in the great "ictorian bed with the half canopy which Aunt "ammie and "obina had occupied when last we were at Edgewood.

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May 10th - Friday.

It seemed strange this morning to stay in bed so long after sun-up, but I was determined to stay there so that Mr. Lambdin and his family could have a few moments of freedom before I began stirring around.

Leroy appeared a little after seven and I lingered on in bed until well after eight.

And so through a bath and a shave, and so down on the front gallery where I found Mary where it was pleasant to say Happy Birthday to her.

We decided to run into town and call on Miss Corrine Henderson and Mrs. Ayres, her two aunts at Melmont and pick up an old plantation book which they had brought up from their plantation of Roseland down near Windy Hill Manor.

It was delightful to see these charming ladies again, and we had a pleasant half hour of conversation before Mary and I said goodbye and headed for Mrs. Keally's house, the old Henderson place hard by "unleith, where this third sister of the Melmont girls lives.

I found the house charming and Mrs. Kelly equally so. She was kind enough to let us have several old plantation scrapbooks and a copy of the 1825 issues of the Natchez newspaper,--Ariel.

These we took with us to look at at ou.

On our way back through town, we stopped at the old Presbyterian Church where the Hendersons had attended for generations. It is a lovely structure, erected by Levi Weeks, the same architect who built Auburn so beautifully. It was interesting to notice the two little pews to the right and left of the pulpit in the corners of the hall. These were the ~~only~~ the pews where the colored people in ante-bellum days sat when they were to become members of the church. This is the first time I realized that members of the Presbyterian church included the white people as well as their slaves but so Miss Corrine assures me it was.

And so back to Edgewood for dinner where we found Mrs. Summers of Hattiesburg, Miss for dinner, too. She will be here with her husband as guests tonight.

At three, Mr. Lambdin brought the boys back from school in town and I rode back to town with him, leaving Mary and her guest to entertain the Pine Ridge Study Club this afternoon.

I was delighted to find Mrs. Brandon in town. She showed me some interesting souvenirs of her family, including the B.L.C. Wailes portrait by Audubon, the Leven Wailes Commission, the Covington Commission signed by Washington, etc., etc. She also showed me a number of



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pictures of Washington, Miss., and several pages of B.L.C. ailes addresses which she had copied in capital letters so that I could read it. She also wished me to take the manuscript she has done on the History of Washington, and says that she intends sending Aunt Cammie and me the Wailes Diary this summer when she starts for Georgia.

We ran into town for a bite of supper, talking the while regarding my hope to secure a grant of a thousand dollars or more for her to edit her grandfathers diary. She was enthusiastic over the prospect. I was enchanted at her animation.

We also spoke of Mrs. Moore, whom Mrs. Brandon tells me has just resigned from her present W.P.A. job, and is leaving for New York to study for two weeks, after which she will return to Natchez to do publicity work for Natchez. I don't know who this story will unravel, but on the face of it, I imagine it is going to have so rather thin or somewhat thick layers, and I cannot imagine what the future may reveal in this connection.

I left Mrs. Brandon about six, as she was going to the Court house to see Mrs. Phipps, but not before we had both walked over to look at the Andrew Marshall house,--a large old brick house, occupied by negroes. Its location makes it a particularly desirable piece of property, as that entire street has improved so steadily of late.--Connelly's Tavern, the new Auditorium, Chactow, Cherokee, etc. I'm afraid I shall never get hold of it, much as I should like to with a view of restoring it as a memorial to the Benjamin Franklin of the great southwest.

And so goodby to Mrs. Brandon, and over to Mr. Lambdin's office to ride back to Edgewood with him, and so to supper with Mr. Lambdin's brother and Mr. and Mrs. Summers as additional guests.

Afterward Mary and I went up to my room and read until ten from the 1825 Natchez newspapers,--the Ariel.

I am sorry I mist all the news today, for as I understand it, the Germans invaded the Netherlands and Holland or rather Belgium, and I reckon old Chamberlain resigned, too, although I haven't heard any of the particulars.

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May 11th - Saturday.

A beautiful day, with the dawn spreading a delicious cool silver across a deep deep blue of sky. From my great Victorian bed I watched the dark green of the magnolias turn lighter as turned lighter, the little lambs away on the other side of the trees of the garden bleating after their recent sheering, and a chorus of songsters sang for the joy of morning with a sinister antiphonal of a marauding jay.

I imagined it had been five o'clock a long time ago at Melrose and Frank had probably finished serving his several rounds of coffee and was now probably on horseback out toward little River and Aunt Cammie was no doubt cracking a kindly whip at Bluff and Sam.

I smoked a cigarette and listed for the sound of a car indicating that Mr. Lambdin had started for business, taking Jeff and Waldo to school, leaving the household devoid of its primary rush of the morning, so that I might arise and bathe without thought of holding up the parade.

A little after seven, Leroy arrived with my tray, his face seeming darker and more aboriginal above his snow white starched jacket. We chatted for a moment about the sheep as I sampled the coffee, and then after a hurried repast, he told me that my bath was ready.

By nine I joined Mary in the front Library, and together we chatted about our programme for the day. I shall never cease marveling at the extreme kindness--the unique absence of self--which these kindly people of Natchez always undertake as a matter of course to do exactly what their guests may want to do by way of exploring the countryside and visiting people. Nowhere in the world have I ever found such exquisite courtesy for the whims of the visitors.

Mary superintended a bit of planting of various flowers she had brought from Melrose, while I joined her father under the great live-oak in front of the house. Leroy had brought him out in his wheel chair, and I sat beside him for a little while, talking of old Natchez. He spoke of the Fosters who had owned Greenwood, which is now his plantation. It was his understanding that all the Fosters were large men, physically,--some of them weighing up to four hundred and fifty pounds. From a monetary view-point, it was said they were all rather niggardly, indicating that old Thomas Foster might have been adamant as to the price at which he would demand for freeing Prince, although the manumission papers would seem to indicate that he received nothing by way of financial recompense when Prince finally was released. Of the two tombstones on Greenwood plantation, he referred to the one of Thomas Foster and Cassandra Foster Speed saying that he thought Cassandra Foster Speed to be the wife of Thomas, but this seems unlikely to me.



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I might remark in passing a rather amusing remark that Waldo,-- no in his ninth or tenth year, made when his Mother and I were in the library. At that time, before Mr. Henderson had been wheeled out of doors, Mary asked Waldo where Leroy was. Waldo replied that Leroy is taking up Grandpa. I had heard of bringing up Father, but taking up Grandpa was new.

Mr. Henderson and I had coffee under the live-oak, with Mary chatting with us, and when we were done with our brew, May and I jumped into the car and plunged into the deep cool of the pines of the Pine Ridge road toward town.

We stopped at Melmont to pick up Miss Corine, and so headed down the old Kingston road.

Miss Corinne is Mr. Henderson's sister. He is eighty and seems about sixty. She is rather tall, somewhat thin, is distinguished looking, and altogether charming. Possibly her charm is enhanced by the fact that she is slightly deaf, for as so frequently is the case, this affliction has tended to alter her voice,--not in a steady raising of the pitch as so frequently is the case, but rather, keeping the tonal quality on a certain pleasant level from which is slipped most unexpectedly on certain words and phrases into an astonishing falsetto. The effect is at one entertaining and frequently hilarious.

As we sped along the lovely shadow-patched traces, she spoke of Longwood where her kin folk had lived and where she had gone often to parties, etc.

That brought us around to the builder of Longwood, Dr. Haller Nutt, and so in natural sequence to his wife whom Miss Corinne had known well for years and years, and who possibly may have been her cousin.

Mrs. Nutt had been a Miss Williams, and as a girl had been madly in love with a youth of little or no account. Her parents had frowned on the friendship of these young people and had forbidden their young daughter to receive the boy. One night, however, the little lady returned home at some scandalous hour,--twelve or one o'clock. She said she had been horseback riding with the youth the family frowned upon. Parental domination accordingly swung into action and Miss Williams was locked in her room and not permitted to leave it for several days. While she was thus incarcerated, the youth went on a bender, and after a drunken brawl was found dead.

Miss Williams was accordingly released from her gilded cage, but her parents' satisfaction with the solution of one problem was shadowed by their daughter's announcement in bitterness that for herself she would never love but the youth whom they had denied her, and that she would certainly marry the first man who came her way.

Dr. Haller Nutt, it seems, was the lucky man. He had admired Miss Williams for ever so long, and Dame Fortune led his footsteps in the direction of the Williams home immediately following the youthful lady's announced determination to marry anyone who chanced her way.

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And so Miss Williams became the wife of Dr. Haller Nutt, and from certain points of view it wasn't a bad match, for Dr. Nutt was fabulously rich, with a flock of opulent plantations, including Winter-quarters, in Tensas Parish on the Louisiana side of the Mississippi, and the Longwood property almost across from Gouster Place in Natchez. There was only one fly in the ointment. She never loved Dr. Nutt, and frankly said so to everyone, including her children.

Miss Corrine says that Mrs. Nutt wasn't a beautiful woman but she was one of the most attractive women she ever saw, and this wasn't an opinion which was entirely Miss Corrine's, as General Grant and plenty of Yankee politicians ultimately proved.

But that is getting ahead of the story. The Nutts were married, lived in fine style, owned hundreds,--possibly thousands of slaves, marketed thousands of bales of cotton yearly, accumulated a fine library, traveled extensively both in America and in Europe, and finally commissioned the Philadelphia architect, Sloane, to build them one of the finest houses in the Natchez region. It was patterned along the lines which Orson Fowler had written about to such a large audience in the 1849 era, so that by 1858, Natchez was about to witness the erection of the first real American house in the Mississippi Valley, although to this year of grace, 1940, people in Natchez still think the house is of Moorish origin,--and Heaven knows why, save for the fact that the cupola on the top may vaguely suggest the turban of ~~some~~ they may have seen in a movie.

The story of the building of the octagonal Longwood is as old as the hills, and I suppose I have recorded it a half dozen times in this Journal. In any event the walls were finished, the roof one, and the ground floor of eight rooms and a circular center room were hastily put in order before the Confederate War had started to reach its devastating scythe into the Natchez region. The Carrara marbles for the staircase, statues, etc., were in a New Orleans Governmental Warehouse from which after the war they would be auctioned for storage fees.

Dr. Haller Nutt died during the war, and peace and reconstruction saw the vast Nutt fortune dwindle and dissolve into nothing, as slaves were set free, cotton fields left uncultivated, and taxes mounted into proportions commensurate with the greed and grats that motivated the carpet-bag governments.

But Mrs. Nutt wasn't dismayed. She had been through more shocking situations before,--for losing a lover can scarcely to give any one like Miss Williams anything but a sense of insulation against any catastrophe, social or financial, that may ever follow in later life. And so when the war was done, the young widow Nutt, put on her hat, shook the dust of Natchez from her feet temporarily, and



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and started for Washington.

It is the concensus of opinion that Mrs. Nutt had a way with men. In Washington, she was a guest at the home of Admiral Dalgren, who seems to have been an important man in National affairs at that time.

Through him she met the right people, and once meeting them was easily the mistress of a situation. She spoke of the confiscations of her cotton during the war, the fact that she was a poor widow, mother of fatherless children, probably wept a little at the proper moment, and possibly laughed a little boisterously if the occasion demanded. Congress, it seems, had appropriated certain sums to recompense losses through confiscation,--particularly designed for those who had been Union sympathizers. It must be said that the Nutts in Natchez had always been considered more or less on the fence in the late struggle. Probably Mrs. Nutt had, like a female Rhett Butler, watched the whole business with a cold clear gaze, and saw to it that she never let him emotion bind her to keeping an eye on which side her bread was buttered.

And so one day Mrs. Nutt came back from the Capitol to the Dalgrens with a check for seven-hundred and fifty thousand dollars in her pocket. She certainly had done a good day's work.

Unfortunately she didn't hurry to cash to paper, and so when she presented it for payment several days later, the funds allotted for this type of flim-flam, as it must have been,--had already been exhausted.

The widow Nutt returned to Natchez. Winter Quarters was far in arrears in its taxes. Fifteen thousand dollars was needed to save it. In some manner that isn't clear, Mrs. Nutt accumulated the money and gave it to her son John, a rather wayward fellow, to take it to Tensaw Parish to pay the taxes and thus save the plantation. There was a time limit as to when the taxes had to be paid, and John was fortunate to get a boat that would get him to Tensaw just in time. On the boat, however, he got into a card game. It must have been fascinating, for he became so engrossed that he forgot to get off the boat when it stopped at the Tensaw landing, and so as the craft continued up stream, leaving Tensaw and Winter-Quarters receding in the background, John played on with the card sharks, and before he arrived at the next landing, the fifteen thousand dollars had passed into the pockets of the gamblers.

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But where Mrs. Nutt had scraped up the fifteen thousand dollars I do not know, but it was apparent to the world that even though she had thus lost this tidy sum plus the Winter-Quarters plantation, she was not at all daunted. She accordingly put on her hat again and started for Washington. Once again under the wing of the Admiral Dalgrens in the Capitol, she was soon finding means to charm the politicians and it is said she got the ear of General Grant.

And in proof of the fact that beauty is not the only key by which a woman can unlock the coffers of the Nation, it wasn't long before Mrs. Nutt had weeded a check for one hundred and thirty five thousand dollars out of the Government on the same old pretext of confiscated cotton. With this check, Mrs. Nutt did not linger by the wayside in her route from the legislative halls,--or possibly the Presidential suite, to the nearest Federal bank, and with this neat roll in her pocket, she returned to Natchez. She and her family were then living comfortably in the eight rooms on the ground floor of Longwood, and now she might complete the upper stories in a simple style if she had so chosen. But not Mrs. Nutt. She said that there was only one way the building should be completed, and that was in the manner her husband had originally planned it, and even though she never cared a fig for him, she would certainly respect his memory by not doing a half job of finishing on the foundations he had so magnificently conceived. It is possible, too, that being a smart woman she wasn't dreaming of tying up all her cash in a building of such magnitude.

In the mean time her children were growing apace. I must inquire about the daughter, whose name, I believe may have been Lily, and then, too, there was John.

In upper Mississippi lived the Worthington's, a family of prominence and considerable fortune. A beautiful daughter, whose name, if I remember correctly was Mary, had been the pride and joy of the household. It was a sad night when Mary, after the family retired, remembered some article she wanted to leave out for the servants in their preparation for the family breakfast, went to the pantry without disturbing the family. Her father heard a noise in the pantry shortly afterward, and stealing forth with his gun shot at the figure moving in the darkness. It was Mary whom he shot, and forever after she was an invalid. But Mary was attractive to John, for she was beautiful,--and besides she was an heiress. And so John married her, but alas for poor John, Mary died at an early age before her father's property had passed to her, so that he again became a liability to the widow Nutt.



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But John Nutt wasn't discouraged by the unkind turn that Fate had given him. With another rogue from Natchez they went to Louisville, or some other large city up the River, and each registered at the same hotel, arriving at the desk a little time apart. When the second arrived, he remarked to the clerk that he noticed the name of a wealthy youth from Natchez already registered, and the first youth, a little later, while at the desk on some pretext, remarked the same regarding the second. The news soon spread that two prominent and especially wealthy young men were guests at the hotel, and the butterflies of the social whirl were soon in a dither.

Somehow John had raked up ten thousand dollars from some lace and this he spent lavishly. He soon found a likely maiden, whose father, although not rich, was comfortably well off, and so John hustled her into a marriage, in spite of her protests that she still had two more years in school ahead of her. They were married and went to Texas on their honeymoon, where John dropped this thousands with reckless abandon, and when it was gone, the youthful bride returned to her parental roof, bringing her husband with her to enjoy the old man's hospitality. Fortunately, John eventually died shortly afterward, and his young bride was not long in finding another husband.

In the mean time, Mrs. Nutt hadn't been letting the grass grow under her feet. She had again gotten hold of General Grant's ear,--or possibly it was the other one this time,--and another check was in the offing. Shortly Mrs. Nutt's bank roll had been run up with another seventy five thousand dollars.

In all, it would seem that old Mrs. Nutt got three or four checks from the Federal Government. One for seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars, one for two hundred and fifty thousand and one for one hundred and thirty five thousand dollars.

Incredible as it may seem, the final payment of a claim by the same lady was not settled until 1932 when a final payment was made.

When this 1932 settlement of the 75,000 dollar payment came up, the former widow of John, who had subsequently married, came to Natchez to claim her former husband's share of the division. All of the Nutts, Lily, Julie, etc., got Miss Corinne and others of the gentry to swear they had never heard of this person. And the former wife of John made a bad showing by saying in Court that she had never heard of Lily Ward,--and it was marvelous to hear Miss Corinne roll off that "never heard" business, which she expostulated with gesticulations.

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Put enough of this Nutt business. We were already well along the path leading to Cherry Grove Plantation on the right, and Antua on the left, stopping for a moment to see this beautiful old place which now so sorely in need of repair. It had been the Chase home, and Miss Corinne had been there often as a girl. Mr. Chase had arranged a marvelous museum on the second floor where he kept a quantity of interesting historical pieces, including large and unique pieces of Indian pipes, wampum, etc., given him by the Indian tribes in recognition of the esteem of his settlement of the Choctaw and Chickasaw disputes.

A little further along road, at the old negro church, we turned to the right, toward the West, and headed into the region once the stronghold of the Gillespie clan. We stopped at Mount Carmel church, and lovely little colonial structure, which is pretty well preserved, although the plaster of the ceiling on the front gallery is in need of repair. We then continued along the road, passed famous old Egypt plantation which had been so fabulous in ante-bellum days. Its marbles are now in the Court building at Natchez.

From there we crossed the new cement highway, and continued over and up the rise of ground to the old Helm place,--the name of which no one could remember. It is an exceptional house, with a long gallery running across the entire front, on which open five doors and ten windows, entering five rooms that run along this front gallery. Behind these five rooms at the back of the house are five or rather four rooms, two of having been joined into a single room. From the gallery we could look out across the valley toward the Gillespie domain which we had just left, and Miss Corinne pointed out where Mount Pleasant and Hollywood had been. A little to the left we could see the mounds,--Indian-- which once were White Apple Village. This property is now being cleared of underbrush and Jeff. Davis Dixon, the former operator of the Sports Palace of Paris, is getting it ready for another type of promotion.

This lovely Helm place where we stood is now owned and occupied by the Mazique negro family. To the rear of the house are fine out buildings, including a two story carriage house with fine stationary blinds, and large kitchen and servants house, of size and design comparable to the carriage house, a well house, etc., etc. The place is a jewel, and confidentially Mrs. Barnum of Arlington is angling for it.

It was getting lunch time, and so we returned to town, stopping for a moment to see the place occupied by the Presbyterian minister on the corner of Rankin street where that thoroughfare begins at the south end of town. And so we dropped Miss Corinne at Melmont, and so came back home for dinner.

Before three we were leaving Edgewood again and had picked up Miss Corinne, and were headed south again on the Kingston road.



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This time we stopped at Mantua, and Mary and I went in. Two sweet little girls,--poorly dressed and obviously the inhabitants of this lovely old place. They said they were glad we called and asked us if we wouldn't come in. I suppose they were about eight or nine years old, and the youngest carried a big rosy baby on her hip. We were enchanted at the invitation, and we tread lightly up the steps to the front gallery, for the steps were so badly rotted they seemed likely to give way under our feet.

The gallery was enclosed on three sides by the main house and two ~~wings~~ wings that projects to the right and left. In the main room we noted a lovely plaster medallion on the ceiling,--a rose and thistle design with a beautifully classical circular edge. A fine old wooden mantle ~~was~~ suffered at the great chimney. There were no chairs in the room,--only an old dilapidated dresser. To the left of this lovely old room was another room of the same size, connected by double doors. There had been a chimney at the far end of that room, too, but the chimney had fallen down. Three decrepit and rather messy looking beds were all the furniture that this room boasted. The little girls said the house was so pretty they would like to have us step out to the gallery in back of the room which we had originally entered. It was an enclosed gallery, with a ~~very~~ charming staircase that lead up to the second floor. At either end of this gallery,--many of whose stationary blinds had disappeared were two projecting rooms that balance the two on the front of the house. They also took us into the room to the left of the central room. It also had a lovely medallion and fireplace. Chickens were being kept in the e. We investigated the little rooms that projected across the front gallery on either end of the front of the house. They were charming rooms, with little staircases, but of course dreadfully dilapidated. We tried to step from one of these rooms out onto the front gallery, but one of the little girls explained that the door was nailed shut "so the snakes wouldn't come in and bite the baby".

We had rather hoped to go up stairs to see the place where the museum had been but the girls said their married sister lived up there, so we gathered from their tone of voice that it would be better better not to.

And so we said goodby, receiving as graciously as we could the exquisite cordiality of these unexpected little ladies whose courtesy so jar against the poverty and squalor we saw about the place. We are going back there again to see these little ladies.

And so we continued down the kingston road, passing by the Eagle's Nest, Retirement and other old plantation houses whose names I have forgotten, and so around to the Harry Winstons who live at Moreland.

They say this house was formerly an overseers house on the Souzae property. They have done much,--the Winstons--by way of repairs,--

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and not entirely for the preservation of the original house. For example, they have put cement over the old brick pavements which used to form a sort flooring between the house and the dairy, etc. There were a few interesting pieces in the house, but now many. Mr. Winston was kind, and Mrs. Winston was equally cordial. She is a beautiful woman and in a way reminds me in some respects of Sister.

We were enchanted to see the Jenkins Diary,--1846 to 1852, which Mr. Jenkins had kept at Elgin. It seems to be a very interestingly written six volumes, although we turned through only a few pages. L.S. ~~W~~ has copied this diary for which they gave Mrs. Jenkins one hundred dollars for the privilege.

We had hoped to continue around to the old swazee house, about 10 miles further along, and to the left, but time was getting late, and so we turned back toward home. We did drive in at the old Sir William Dunbar home, the ~~Forest~~ Forest, which had burned about 1852, I reckon. It was curious, we had just read about it in the Jenkins diary. We noted where the gardens had been to the left of the house as one approaches the rear of the place from the new road. From the Forrest, we turned left for the road that leads to Elgin, and I found this one of the loveliest trace approaches to a plantation home that I have seen. Mrs. Bean was not at home, and we didn't stay long, therefore, although we promised ourselves to come back again and wander through the lovely garden that is delightfully landscaped down from the house toward the bayou.

And so back to town, where we said goodby to Miss Corrine, and so came along home with Mr. Lambdin and his brother from Jackson following close behind, so that supper was accomplished before eight, and a delicious supper it was, with an excellent salade and a biscuit and strawberry at the conclusion that suited me to a T.

We chatted until 10 in the library, and so said goodnight.



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May 12th - Sunday.

Leroy arrived at 7:30, and in accordance with the custom of the house, I shortly afterward had a nice fat pillow on my stomach and was eating a relishing breakfast of grits, bacon and eggs, toast and coffee. A cigarette and then a second, and then I was up and done with my bath and shave by a little after eight.

Bailey Summers had left his portable typewriter for me and I accordingly spent my entire day on the side gallery, writing some on my Journal, and copying many notes that Mary read me from the Natchez newspaper, the Ariel, for the year 1825. In it we ran across a reference to the "gum jail" near Washington, Miss. I am wondering what that could have been.

Dinner, with Jeff and Waldo having guests of their age all of whom dined in a back dinning room while we three, Mary, big Jeff and I ate in the big dinning room.

Shortly afterward the boys went swimming down at the pond, and Mary walked down to one of the little artificial lakes where her husband was discouraging an old Canadian goose from sitting on eggs any longer after a couple of months with no results had proved that this year's hatching of a breed would not amount to much.

It was pleasantly cool on the side gallery, what with a gentle breeze and plenty of shade, with ice tea and little cakes to help out.

The Summers arrived just before supper, after which we all went out and looked up a couple of constellations, although the moon was a little bright to make detections of the lesser stars very easy.

We chatted until ten, when I said good night and went to bed.

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May 13th, --Monday.

Up at seven thirty after Leroy had brought me my breakfast and balanced it on the fat pillow on my stomach.

I heard the Summers leaving about eight and I arose shortly afterward for my bath, so that I was down stairs a little after 8:30.

May and I chatted for a while with her father, Mr. Henders son. We spoke of the old Helm place, with the five doors and ten windows across the front gallery where we had visited on Saturday. This is where the negro family of Mazique live now. Mr. Henderson told me that it was formerly the old Railey place. This did my heart much good, as this proved it to be the famous house with the finest gardens in Mississippi as described by Ingraham in his South West. I must bring Aunt Cammie here.

Heaven help poor Robina.

Before ten o'clock, Mary and I started out for "Aunt Lavainias



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May 14th.  
Monday

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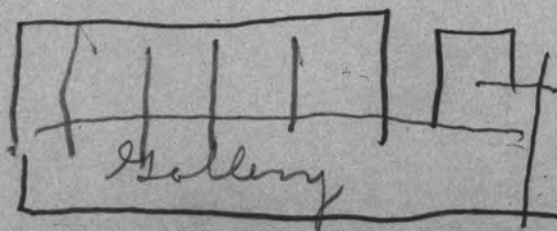
I think I have already started today's Journal on some scrap of paper but I can't seem to locate it, so I shall start all over again.

I was up and abroad by eight thirty, taking a little tour of the little artificial lakes, and so back to the House, where I worked at my typewriter,--or rather Bailey Sumner's typewriter on the side gallery.

A little before ten, after Mary and I had had a little tete-a-tete, we started out for Oakland Plantation on the old Morgantown Road. This is the old "White Turpin" place, when "Aunt" Lavinia was Mrs. Turpin, and later when the Turpin daughter married Henry K. Button, it passed into that family name.

We drove from "Agewood" down the beautiful traces a little below "Oster's Mound" plantation, crossed St. Catherine's Creek, and so turned to the right toward Natchez just before getting to Washington. About two miles along this road, we turned in at the old trace road which we found so deep and so badly washed that it seemed impracticable to attempt a negotiation of its jagged floor. We accordingly left the car and proceeded on foot, finding a little colored boy a-top a mule, who told us the general direction we should follow to reach the old sight of the Oakland "plantation" house. It was over fearfully parched fields, whose top-soil had long since been washed away, ~~xxxx~~ up and up gently rolling table land, reminding me much of the emplacement of the old Chateau of Muller Hill in central New York state which people say the King of France,--Charles X built there in Napoleonic days.

The little colored boy had told us that we would find the house near the big pine tree, and this I gather is a favorite way of designating a locality, since as had been the case at "Oster's Mound" last Winter, we not only saw a big pine tree but we saw a whole lot of them which clustered on the edge of a bayou that sagged into forrest on the left. We finally reached what appeared to be the highest point in the entire region,--possibly some mile and a half from the road, and there we located the tell-tale cistern. It must have been a big one, for I could hear bricks caving into the water or possibly the endless void beneath my feet long before I was near the opening. Mrs. Brandon who had been there in the old days gave me this plan of the house



The gallery running the entire length of the main house, with the detached drawing room,--It must have been a very large room--was a feature that was quite unique for houses in that locality. The

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The gardens sloped down away from the house toward the West and South west, and from the place where the gallery must have been, we could see the spire of the catholic church in Natchez, some miles away. Ingraham or some other person writing in --no it was someone else writing in 1859 or 1860 who described a plantation home some miles from Natchez from the gallery of which you could see the town's spires in the distance, and I presume this might have been the home,--Oakland,--as there probably aren't many such homes miles from the city whence the town can be seen.

We located the remains of the kitchen building, and some other evidences of the places where the chimneys might have been in the big house, and then we began searching for the family grave yard which we presumed might be near the house, although when we finally did locate it, it was quite a distance away and off toward the bayou. It was a clump of trees and a tangle of brambles, with one lone bridal-wreath bush blooming bravely in this desolation. A great pine had fallen across the center of the cemetery, crashing "White Turpin's obelisque" shaft and vines and brambles plus the weight of the great tree trunk made it hopeless to try to explore what might be concealed under the log. We did find a child's stone,--a son of White Turpin by his first wife, Rebecca "Macgruder", and we also found a daughter of ~~xxxxxxxx~~ "White Turpin" and his second wife, Lavinia, which had been named Rebecca after Lavinia's sister and White's first wife,--but that was about all. Of course we had hoped to find "Liza" "Lloyd" Macgruder's grave, for I am under the impression she died here, since she lived with the family at Oakland after "Aunt" Livia Dunbar, which whom she had lived, had died in 1859. Macgruder "rake" is under the impression that Eliza eventually went back to Maryland, but Mrs. Brandon doesn't think so, and it is true that Eliza's will was probated in the Adams county will book in Natchez.

But the sun was getting high by this time, and so we turned out steps back down the gently undulating table land towards the car. It was depressing to notice that scarcely any grass could grow here on this once luxuriant plantation, for the upper soil had all been washed away, and barren was the garden that had once been the pride of Oakland.

And so back to "Agewood", where Mr. "Ambain" joined us for dinner after which Mary and I drove up to Mount "Ararat" plantation to call on Mr. Macgruder Drake and his sister, Mrs. Jane Cooper. We chatted for a little while in the library, looking over some old 1808 Natchez newspapers, and speaking of "Elizabeth" "female" academy of Washington, Miss., of which Miss Jane has written a pamphlet. I was hoping she might let me see a copy but she didn't.

Mr. Drake had asked us to ride with him up the traces above Church Hill, and after saying goodbye to "Miss" Jane May and I followed Mr. "rake" in our car up to the second,--or rather the first gate by the big road at the plantation entrance. There we



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At this gate, we left our car and joined Mr. Drake in his. As we were leaving, he called to a colored man working in the field nearby to keep an eye on the car while we were gone. We expected to be back about six.

We headed toward Church Hill, and as we passed Arounda Plantation, Mr. Drake pointed out that the road in ante-bellum times passed well to the left of the present road, so that it ran between Arounda and Mount Ararat which probably weren't very far apart, although I have never walked to either of them. He also intimated that he thought Captain Johnson had appropriated Aunt Olivia's fortune when he acted as executor of her will. He mentioned specifically that Capt. Johnson sold Arounda Plantation of which he was the executor to young Johnson, his own son, and that the record of payments on this sale seemed extremely vague, if, indeed, any payment was ever made.

We passed Miss Lulu's place and then the Church of Church Hill, and continuing north we soon were in front of Gayoso Plantation,-- the old home of the Greens. We drove in,-- a winding road that once had been a trail through a magnificent park and garden, but now many of the great oaks have been cut and the gardens have had slight attention of late. Perhaps a quarter of a mile or more from the road we swung around in front of Gayoso,-- a large old plantation house with a great double gallery running across the entire front of the house. The fan light over the front door was unique, with the ribs of the fan swelling into little circles half way up, so that the glass in the center of these ribs formed a simple but lovely semi-circle across the middle section of the fan-light.

The present owner, Mr. Fonda, formerly from Arkansas, received us most cordially. We told him how much we liked his house, and a little ruefully he expressed the wish that his wife would only like it just a little. We stepped into the great hall that runs straight through the house, and were enchanted with the beautiful white woodwork, the pale blue walls, and the magnificent great medallion in the ceiling. The rooms to the right and left were well decorated in the same manner although the wings of the house had not been painted inside, as in 1937 Mr. Fonda suffered severe financial reverses, while two of his sons were killed and a third one tried to commit suicide by driving his car off a bridge over a deep bayou, so that he was horribly injured and is at present in some sort of a mental institution. I understand he has three other sons that are of little comfort to him. In speaking of his work at restoring Gayoso, he told us something I wish he hadn't. He said that much of the brick and lumber he had used in this work he brought from the huge old Silas Dent plantation home,-- a little further up toward Rodney. This was once a magnificent home, and set on a high hill with a remarkable view. I was sorry to learn that one house had to be destroyed to repair another, but obviously Mr. Fonda loved Gayoso, and that is something more than can be said for many owners of many a fine old home. In speaking of the Dent Plantation, I might remark that it was old Silas Dent

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Silas Dent who was so eccentric as to have his tombstone inscribed before his death with the following epitaph:

Here lies the body of Silas Dent.  
Who kicked up his heels and to Hell he went".

He is buried in the Rodney cemetery, but I understand that one of his sisters had the tombstone placed flat on the grave when her husband died, and that the face of the stone is down so that one would have to raise it if one were read it now.

From Gayoso, we continued North, passing by Calverton, the old Calvet plantation,-- the great house of which burned some years back and from there we continued to Woodlawn Plantation, the home of David Hunt,-- one of the most remarkable planters of the old South. David Hunt once owned 20 plantations, at least 1700 slaves, gave liberally to educational and religious organizations, in one year having given fifty thousand dollars to Oakland College,-- now Alcorn, and fifty thousand dollars to the Colonization Society for re-patriating colored people in Africa. I believe this was to enable the free man of color to return to Africa,-- Liberia,-- since Hunt did not believe it was sound to have colored people both free and slave in the same country. He was clever, too, in investing in property in Cincinnati, for when he died in 1861 he predicted that the war would ruin the south, and later it was the Cincinnati property that gave some of his 15 off-spring a chance to get another footing on the economic ladder after the plantation one had collapsed. It was this same David Hunt who had given two of his daughters Comewood and Handsdown,-- and the rest of the children accordingly.

In David Hunt's days, the plantation road lead straight from the main road right up to the big house, and on either side of the road were great live-oaks, with luxuriant gardens beyond these on either side. A few years back one Jacob Wagner came here from Germany, purchased Woodlawn, cut down the avenue of oaks, ploughed up the gardens and planted a pecan orchard in the great tract. He accordingly enters the plantation today from one side, although a great cypress carved post,-- one of the two gate posts of other days still marks the stop where the gate stood.

Woodlawn is a conservative, sturdy, substantial house,-- much like its builder I imagine. At present a screened gallery runs across the front but formerly there was just a modest portico of classic little pillars and beautifully carved cornices, etc. For some unknown reason the Wagners saved the pieces of the original, for Mrs. Wagner showed them to me in the attic.

The fan lights of Woodlawn are smart and restrained,-- arching high over the door, but not extending to the side lights which are unusually far from the door,-- some foot or two. The woodwork, both upstairs



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woodwork both upstairs and done is beautiful, with a restrained elegance that is altogether satisfying, since the balance between utility and pleasure to the eye seem in perfect harmony. The unique closets built into the walls is another feature which is particularly arresting in a house built so early in a region where practically no closets ever were thought of, apparently.

We should have liked to spend much more time, looking at the several interesting out-buildings, for "avid Hunt believed in manufacturing as much as possible on his own property; so that aside from the usual kitchens, carriage house, etc., etc., there were weaving quarters, a tannery, a shoe shop etc., on "oodlawn. I should record in passing, too, that the great gallery of this house runs clear across the back of the house, and that in the back of the house was a garden which in Mr. Hunt's day nicely balanced with the great gardens where "r. Wagne ner's pecaness now grow.

From Woodlawn we continued along the high rolling country through beautiful traces, and slowly wound down the old road to "odney,-- that amazing old ante-bellum "issippi "iver port which once had been a thriving community with churches, houses, stores, banks, etc. One bank alone was capitolized at eight hundred thousand dollars. But today the town is dead,--or practically so, for after the War, the capricious "Ole Miss", meander away, leaving the old port five miles from its former banks, and reducing the place to poverty. But one must never suppose that the "iver has forgotten "odney, for twice in recent years in the "pringtime, Ole Miss has paid a return visit, as we were shown in a house in the center of the town where both in 1927 and 1936 the water rose to six feet in the house, and of course inundated all the surrounding countryside for miles.

We stopped before a charming little house where a kindly old Mammy asked us if we would like to see the inside, after we had remarked upon the pretty fan light over the door. "e entered the house and found the woodwork around the doors and ceiling and windows to be exquisite. The house was as neat as a pin, with the beds nicely made and looking fresh and snowy white. I'll bet no visitor had been in the house in years, and I must say that the old colored woman seem as gay as a lark that someone cared to visit her.

Up the road a pice and on the opposite side, we went into the fine old brick church, charming both within and without, with neatly curved pews, each with its little door, and a smart little slave gallery. The church had been shelled by "rant in the War but had been repaired later. "t needs repair again.

and so out from "odney, up the hills to the east, and so through deep, lusciously cool traces to Alcorn college, to again view of steps of "indsor, and then on a few miles to see the ruins of "indsor again, --Mary never having been there. Neither has her husband, nor has he ever been to "odney, which seems a so odd to me.

By now it was getting toward sunset, and as some twenty miles

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some miles lay between us and home, we thought we had best turn in that direction. And so we ran over to the cement highway, and from "orman to Fayette, and so clipping along down the road until a tire blew out. It was dusk, and we still hoped to get home for dinner with "r. L. and the boys, but "ate was against it. "r. "rake couldn't get the nuts to turn, although he worked hard in every attempt possible, and once when the wrench slipped, his arm struck the fender, knocking off his wristwatch and smathing it once and for all. In attempting to adjust the jack, he just about ruined the nice suit he was wearing, but through it all he manifested a calm and self-possession that was nothing short of heroic. "inally he went in the dark in search of a colored man whose cabin might be off in the direction where we could here some chickens making a racket. A little later he returned with a big fellow, but neither could this man budge the rusted mechanism. "e accordingly sent the man afoot down to "annonsburg to get a g aage man and a car to take "rs. "ambdin and me back to "t. "rarat, but we declined in advance. "inally another youth came along the road. "e didn't know much about a car, he said, but he'd try. He turned the things off just like one, two, three, and so by the time the other man had returned with a whiteman on foot, the car was practically ready to start.

I had felt so sorry for "r. "rak, and yet I began to feel panicky when I thought of the man whom he had told to keep a eye on the car when we had left it at the Mount "rarat gate. I wispered to "ary that I was praying to Heaven the man hadn't followed instructions "eventually about ninethirty, we reached the gate, and I jumped out to open it, but to my dismay, the white bars yawned before me in the dark,--and sure enough the darkie had never left the spot since we had gone around two thirty in the afternoon.

And so we said goodbye to "r. "rake, and skipped along down the traces toward "ine Ridge. I hated to think of Mr. "ambdin's opinion of me as the cause of his wife's absence from home, for obviously he must have waited a long time for his supper before concluding th t we never were coming home. I reckon it was about ten when we arrived and the boys were in bed and Mr. "ambdin was up-stairs. I washed up a little while "ary chatted with him, and then we both went down stairs for a salade and things, giggling the while over all the misfortunes which seemed to pile up so neatly on top of one another this 13th day of "ay.



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May 14th - Tuesday.

It was a quarter before seven when Henry arrived to balance the breakfast tray on the fat pillow he had first parked on my stomach, and it was a quarter past eight when I heard the car with the boys and their father drive away from the house. That was my signal to arise and slide through my shower.

For half an hour, when I had descended, Mary and I sat on the cool side gallery where she dictated to me from the old plantation scrapbook which I recorded it as best I could on the machine.

By ten we were headed toward town, hoping to call on Miss Corinne and Miss Ellie, for I shall be running back to Melrose today, and I should much like to thank the ladies of Belmont for the pleasant hours I spent with them.

We were disappointed to find that both of them were out, however, and not even Hampton, their faithful Major Momo was home, according to a gardener with whom Mary spoke. Probably he had driven them around to the King's daughters, and institution I had heard of before. As I recall, it is a refuge,--possibly an enforced one, designed for young women who encounter difficulties,--primarily in the department of sex and possibly stork consciousness without the aid and comfort of a registered husband. Someone once told me how enthusiastic some of the older pillars of society were to go once or twice each week to this home to read from the Bible to the girls,--who might understand Occasio better. One lovely old lady once remarked: "I delectate, many of those girls are so nice, and are so interested in various forms of moral teachings we refer to in speaking with them. I do say some of the girls really enjoy and appreciate our kindness, for some of them actually come back a second time".

And so finding no one at Belmont, we ran around to the Risk Library to see if they chanced to have any copies of Judge Shields' history of Matchez. The kindly lady there did have a copy, but recommended some other publications to my consideration, including Ola Vance Oliver's photographic book. I told her I had seen that.

On returning to the car, we discovered that we couldn't unlock it, and so we ran in the Court House to telephone the garage to send someone to open it for us. While there I met Mr Palette who owns the site on which Fort Earborn at Washington, Miss., was formerly located. It was good, too, to run across Joane Flemming, Yrnes whom I hadn't seen in two years. As President of the Matchez Trace Organization, she was reported to have a very interesting diary kept by Dr. Haller Nutt, the builder of Longwood, and Aunt Ammie had written her about it. Mrs. . . . told me it is now in Washington in the hands of Mr. Ash Nutt, and that we might get in touch with him through Rep. Van. McGhee.

Shortly afterward, the man came from the garage, and we accordingly said goodbye to Mrs. . . . and drove around to see Jeff. I had hoped to see Myrtle and Charles for a few minutes,

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but I could locate either of them on the telephone, and then to my surprise I discovered that Henry and Frank had just arrived from Melrose to pick me up, and while I had been hoping that they would get over to Matchez, I hadn't expected them so early.

Henry looked quite spiffy in a black hat, white shirt and dark trousers, while Frank was gay in a new gray Sunday hat, the blue shirt and tie he had received at our party the week before and gray trousers. Somehow I hadn't thought of the boys dressing up to come over to get me, and I must say I should have been enchanted if they had been in their usual costumes of office which they wear at Melrose where the costume has somehow become a part of their personality for me.

I was enchanted to show Frank something of Matchez, for he had heard us all talk about it so much, and so I asked Henry to drive down the old Woodville road,--not the cement highway, but the old dirt road, so heavily draped with beautifully trees and vines above the perpendicular traces.

As we were threading our way southward through the old kingdom of the Gillespies,--Woodstock Plantation, Egypt, The Quarters, etc.,--and at a point where the traces were exceptionally high, Henry suddenly stopped the car. A little red squirrel or chipmunk had started to run across the road, had suddenly stopped in the middle, and sat straight up, with one little paw up-raised as though halting traffic.

Henry remarked that "that sure is the sweetest little thing I ever did see,--looks like it favors a skunk more than anything else",--and Frank, catching sight of it, suggested that we try to catch it, "for I sure would like to take that home to my little boy and maybe we all could tame it".

Where upon both of them jumped from the car like school boys on a frolic, and headed up the perpendicular trace whence the chipmunk had darted. Once at the top of the out, they located the little animal who ~~then~~ started coming down the side again on an old wisteria vine, but half way down, he disappeared in a hole in the side of the trace. The men clambered down the trace again, and once it looked as though they might catch the little fellow, for he did stick his head out the hole, but then disappeared again, and never did come out again.

For some reason, it seems that neither Frank nor Henry had ever seen one of these little animals, and from that moment on for the rest of the day they kept referring to him, saying what they would do if they saw another, how, if they could catch two, they might raise several, etc., etc. I was enchanted that their minds were in such a holiday mood that they had obviously forgotten home and the duties they would again resume on the morrow.

We dined in the car at Woodville, continuing our sight-seeing tour through the lower Woodville road down Fort Adams way, and so up and down dale until a point where the rolling Muncas had nearly flattened out to the dead level that begins below St. Francisville. We rested for a while in a wooded dell, exploring the countryside in a locality where some of us had been before on a bitter cold day last Winter. Between four and five, we headed in a northerly direction again,



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with the three of us sitting in "enry's rather antiquated gasoline wagon, what with treasure we had accumulated filling the rear seat.

We picked up speed on this return trip, so that we reached Natchez before sundown, and it was good to catch another glimpse of Under-the Hill as we crossed the "ississippi.

Once on the Louisiana side, we scooted along at fairly good speed considering the considerable age of the car, and by the time we were half a way toward "infield, we were probably making better than fifty miles an hour. It was dark now, and as we moved along briskly over one of the birdges, a car coming toward us forced us to keep to our side of the thoroughfare, although a young cow suddenly loomed just ahead of us. Choosing the cow instead of the on-rushing car, "enry struck her with the bumper and right fender in such a manner as to throw her up into the air and plumb over the birdge-rain. Her crash into the water below didn't hurt her any more than it would have, had she crashed through our windshield,--and it pleased us much more.

By the time we reached Grand "cove, the roads were covered with soldiers, tanks, and "eaven know what all by way of war paraphernalia,--while away in the little pine trees one could see the flares of camp fires and the outlines of tents. By mid-night, precisely we were home at "elrose again, and I reckon that all three of us were ready for bed.

I went directly to "yle's house to sleep, falling into the depths of the great four-poster almost before I knew it, breathing in deeply the rich perfume of the unbelievable chandeliers lillies which "unt "ammie had placed in a silver vase on the console beside my bed.

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May 15th - ~~Monday~~xxxxxx

Wednesday.

Four thirty, and aside from the usual chorus at dawn from the awakening birds in and about the gardens, there was the pleasant note of "randpa's voice. He must have just discovered that I had returned, and he had climbed up on the bedroom window on the back gallery, and was scratching at the screen and meowing with as much vigor as I ever heard before. I went to the door in the next room to let him in, but he was ther before I was, and was pushing the door open before I had started to pull it open.

I jumped back into bed, and he jumped in, too, and for ten or fifteen minutes there was more rubbing and schmuzzing than I could manage with appreciations,--half asleep as I was.

"ive o'clock and Frank appeared with my morning coffee, dressed in a blue shirt and blue overalls that become him so mightily. He said "unt "ammie had heard us come in last night, in fact had seen us when we carried in my luggage and all, but that she hadn't spoken to us, felling that we must be tired out and would rather go to sleep.

I came over to my house for breakfast about six. The place looked wonderful and smelled so sweet. During my absence, "unt "ammie had made new curtains throughout,--Pacific "uck and white to replace the green ones. "his canvas-like material makes a marvelous decoore for a place like my maisonette, and the long white drapes of the great "astorse window, the "ranch doors, the front door and at either end of the room, hanging down from the balcony to the floor,--all in snowy "acific "uck, and set off with two sofas of the same material. "here was new matting on the floor, too, and advantageously placed about the room were eight different bouquets,--all of white flowers,--regal lillies, Madomma lillies, Louisiana Bay, flocks, and a flock of other flowers whose names I never heard of. As I may have intimated before, no one in the world could ever think of so many nice things to do for others as "unt "ammie does.

Instead of waiting for 10 o'clock coffee, she came over to see me a little after eight, and we plunged into everything that the other had done during our absence. "t seems her coronation of Mother's "ay had gone off satisfactorily which pleased me much, since too much concentration of family always seems to wear her down.

There were so many things to be talked about,--happenings at "elrose, and particularly on Sunday for "unt "ammie's "coronation" which is what Lyle referred to in his letter to her regarding the family dinner that Celeste was giving at her house for the whole family tribe. I'd love to know if "unt "ammie took the occasion of that board to assure all those present that she was no kin to the Henrys. I reckon I had a lot to say to about things I had seen and people I had met in Natches. "n anyevent, the hands of the clock flew around and neither of us got out much mail,--I reckon I pounded off only one or two letters.

Dinnner and afterwards the mail, which was good, especially from "ew York and Texas, and a letter from "indy "ill "aner, ask-



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asking if Aunt Cammie, Lyle - "so celebrated", Robina and I were coming over for tea. That is certainly likely to be as historic an event, when it transpires, as anything that has happened since Aaron Burr courted the beautiful Adelaine in that locality.

I spent the entire afternoon at my typewriter, trying to get caught up on a lot of odds and ends that had been accumulating since last Thursday.

Supper, with plenty of questions from J. A. as to who went to Natchez with me, and with whom I came home, and many unexpected inquiries about the town, such as particulars regarding the cost of restoration of Longwood, which he referred to as "that house that has the places built in it for the Saints", -- meaning I suppose, the niches designed for the white marble statues of the Greek gods. Somehow I felt that "statue" and "Saint" might occupy about the same place in the imagination of one whose mind is so brilliant in the successful operation of a plantation that pays dividends to the title holders, and at the same time is so good as to persuade the tillers of the soil that he is something special when matters of their welfare -- if ever -- come up for consideration. And I shouldn't wonder if he probably does stand out in front of all great operators of labor, as approaching a point where someone might once ask the old, old question: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Aunt Cammie and I read for an hour from Mrs. Brandon's thesis on Washington, Miss., and at eight we said goodnight.

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May 16th - Thursday.

Five and a little after, and Frank arrived with coffee without awakening me, until his return a little before six with my breakfast.

I had slept but little, thanks to Ellen, the laundress, who apparently goes in for the theory that if a little is good, a lot is just dandy, and had so acted when she might have put a little starch on the sheets but instead had put a boxful. Somehow they were as stiff as boards, and I was reminded of what Aunt Cammie had told me about "cooling-boards", -- a straight board that the body of a person who had just died used to be placed in the old days until the body was completely cold. I felt about like that when I actually awoke.

I accordingly left too noble for words when I drummed up enough energy to stick to my original intention of last night to take a prolonged walk this morning.

The sun was bright but the air still cool as I marched over the river bridge, and so on down the Montrose Road. I supplemented my walk with a couple of rides, one by automobile and one by train, and so was back again to the river bridge before 10:30, when J. A. stopped in his car, as asked me to ride with him to look over the labor situation in the little cotton areas on the other side of the river.

And so home a little after eleven, and labo

And so back home a little after eleven, and at work on my machine until dinner, after which came the mail which was exceedingly thin but withal of quality, primarily consisting of mail from Mary Lambdin and Lyle, the latter regretting that we all could not have arranged a tableau that would have confused the soldiers in the War Games by arranging a set with Aunt Cammie as Barbar Fritichie, Robina as Molly Pitcher, etc., etc. He also suggested that we might have organized a chorus from Isle Brevel singing "When doth the rape begin" -- or something equally to the point.

Afternoon, and I spent all my time at the typewriter until six o'clock, when Aunt Cammie returned from town on one of her extremely rare visits to Mrs. Scarborough, who has lived there for 60 years, and consequently can tell lots about the town's development. At 86, she had last night addressed the graduating class of the Normal's Home Economic's class, summing up her remarks with the parallel between one's life and the making of jelly, pointing out that if the ingredients are not cooked enough the stuff doesn't jell, nor does it if it is cooked a little too much.

After supper we read until eight from an 1898 Natchez publication on that town. Later I walked to the saloon to get some ice cream, and it was pleasant in the quiet moonlight plantation road.



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May 17th - Friday.

Last night's clouds that piled up thick, and heavily screened the moon ~~must~~ must have faded into thin air without leaving any rain, for this morning it was all blue and gold again with the earth and air as dry as ever.

I worked all morning at my desk, halting only long enough for coffee and buttermilk with Aunt Cammie at ten and to chat for half an hour with Celeste who came over to see us, bringing me a huge big bouquet of sweetpeas to round out my current display of nine vases which are all doing big business in the lily department. Celeste invited me to go up to the Friedman's camp, between Melrose and Bermuda. She tells me it is simply done but with a maximum of comfort, and that they have a houseboy, called J.C. Mettoyer, whose grandfather once owned all these broad acres along Cane River. I had heard J. C. spoken of before.

Dinner and nice mail, including many clippings and the current Atlantic with excellent articles on the negro which Aunt Cammie wants for her scrapbooks on that particular subject.

There was also a letter, saying that Dr. Oliver is in New York and wants to get in touch with me in order to send me an autographed copy of her volume on Natchez. Apparently she doesn't know that the publishers have already sent me one in consequence of my presentation of the photograph and material for Dr. Oliver.

I worked at my machine until three when I had coffee with Aunt Cammie, making a little tour with her afterward through the magnolia section until a couple of pilgrims blew in,--a Mrs. Glacier and a Madam Cloutier or Prudhomme,--I can never keep them straight. It was obvious that Aunt Cammie was a little nettled by the time that was grinding away on uninteresting conversation, and so I hit upon the idea of going over to see Celine with some medicine for Aunt Cammie, and so I asked the ladies if they were driving that way, and if so, I would wait and ride with them. Naturally I much preferred to walk, but it was the only wedge I could think of for prying them loose. They succumbed, and off we flew.

I was sorry to find, Celine away, and no one at home, with not even a chicken inside the cabin, for the doors were all shut as were the windows, although nothing was fastened. I waited a while, and then remembered that there was some sort of a church doings, and Celine might not be back for a long time, and so I sauntered back toward home.

At the saloon at the end of the bridge, I noticed several large Army trucks parked, and a couple of dozen privates and officers in and about the saloon and in and about Cane River,--some of them diving off the bridge and some splashing about the shore, while the more serious ones were fishing along the banks. I stopped at the saloon and found Bill doing a good business in beer and whiskey. Already the large room in back of the bar had been

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had been pressed into service to lay out the alcoholic casualties,--two privates and two officers already having fallen before the repeated attacks of Demon Rum.

The officers with whom I talked were a little over-seas, but withal nice boys, simple and good hearted, with a certain inclination to talk about life in the several walks of life whence they had deserted in favor of the Army.

Back home, I found that Aunt Cammie had had a second crop of visitors shortly after I had enticed the first batch away. It seems that Miss Maude Stanton had telephoned from Natchez while I was away, too, making further inquiries regarding the time we all would run over the Windy Hill Manor for tea. I must say that going several hundred miles for tea is something,--Robina from Shreveport, Lyle from New Orleans and Aunt Cammie and me from Melrose. Undoubtedly we are all a little unusual but I must say that Aunt Cammie is extraordinary, for what other person of her cares and responsibilities would drop everything for such an hejira.

Supper and afterward more reading from Washington, Mississippi History, and much talk about David Hunt, who undoubtedly was one of the great planters of America,--and yet how strange it is that no one ever heard of him outside of his immediate region, and probably half of those people couldn't even tell you who he might have been.

Eight o'clock, and I said goodnight, making a little tour of the gardens with my flashlight to turn off several of the hydrants we had left running before dinner. The night was bright when once outside the shade of the great oaks, and so I wandered down to the River, where from Bill's saloon came the noise of raucous revelry. Some of the soldiers were dancing on the little gallery in front,--their shoes dangling grotesquely about their necks. This version of the War seems to be suiting the participants but I reckon Cane River inhabitants will be as enchanted when it is all over, regardless of whether the Reds or the Blues win.



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May 18th - Saturday.

Clear skies with a boiling sun continue the order of the day. Someone said yesterday that it hasn't rained since April 30th, and that the river banks are starting to crumble and cave as a result of the extreme dryness.

I worked all morning at my desk, stopping only long enough to have coffee with Aunt Cammie, and to listed to the latest doings of Hitler's troops which after having swallowed up Holland and Belgium, seemed to be headed in a big push toward the French channel ports.

I noticed that it was particularly hot when I went out to the store with the mail. And I gather that man is not the only one to feel the heat, since just before noon, McKinnley and Sam found a moccasin crawling around on the cool brick floor of the dinning room. I reckon it was a lucky thing they caught the reptile before we had all put our feet under the table. Otherwise the briefest blessing ever said in Louisiana might have been even briefer had this unwelcomed guest taken a nip at someone at just the appropriate second.

At demi-tasse time came the mail, with packages from New York and plants from Pine Ridge for Aunt Cammie.

I worked all afternoon until four when Joe came to read to me.

At five thirty I went out to Lyle's house for a quick bath and shave before dinner, and found that Aunt Cammie had added to my collection of flowers there, too. The magnolias in particular were magnificent.

Supper and we read until almost eight o'clock when the wind began blowing furiously. We hastily closed all the blinds and I staggered around in the gardens, shutting off faucets, since a tremendous storm was about to break.

I said goodnight to Aunt Cammie, and went over to my house where I found the draperies blowing madly. I hastily shut the house up tight, and with Grandpa following close at my heels, I bucked the wind and flying dust across the formal garden, through the picket gate and into Lyle's house which looked as though the tornado had already been through the place. Grandpa seemed enchanted to be inside, and for the first time jumped into bed without waiting for me. I secured all the windows and doors on the North gallery, leaving those on the South gallery open. The wind was howling by that time. I pulled the covers up over my head, and went to sleep, enchanted with the thought of how much good the rain would do. I woke up about half an hour later. The wind had ceased. The full moon was out in full force. It hadn't rained a drop.

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May 19th - Sunday.

A quiet day at home.

Five o'clock and the cool blue sky had every promise that it would turn to lead color before seven o'clock and that it would be a scorcher.

Frank arrived at 5:15 with coffee, and we talked longer than we usually do on week-days. J'ai demande a lui ou etait son fils. En confidence, il me dit beaucoup de chose. ....le cage.... chez son pere.....la bataille..... hors de combat.....hors de fenetre.....la boite noire.....et maintenant chez sa mere au bord de la fleuve presde M. il y a six ou hite leines.

Breakfast in my own little maisonette, and at my machine until about nine when Aunt Cammie came to see me for a few minutes. She was going to Cloutierville, and asked if I would care to ride along with her. At first I declined, but on second thought accepted, explaining that I thought a little walk would do me good, and that I would leave her at the Hertzog plantation, and walk part way.

Henry drove us down and on the way we picked up that rogue Clemence who was going in that direction. I left them at the Hertzogs, but didn't walk far before I saw Buddy, as his mother calls him.

I hadn't seen him since he left here a couple of weeks or so ago, and so I was glad to accept his invitation to have a cup of coffee with him on his mothers front gallery. The mother was, like her children, surprisingly young looking. Her son wanted me to see the house, which I enjoyed. It was spotless. Je lui a donne nouvelle de son pere. Il m'a dit qu'il fasse une visite ce soir.

Shortly afterward Henry came along back, having left Aunt Cammie to return to Calrose with her off-spring, while Henry had brought Puny with him, and so the three of us rode back together.

Dinner, and much talk about Aunt Cammie going to "atchez with her daughter on husband on Tuesday. The latter would die if they knew she is also scheduled to go there again on Friday of this week.

I worked all afternoon at my desk, save for coffee with a couple of guests who had run up from Camp Beauregard,--Captain Nickerson, with Major Evert, or some such names. Supper at five, and alone with Aunt Cammie to read from 1825 Natchez newspapers, and so to bed at eight. The moon was bright as day, and I lay long gazing from my bed out into the beautiful white garden, ten time more lively in this wonderful light. J'ai pensee de mon domestique bien-aime et de son fils. And so to sleep.



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May 20th - Monday.

I was a little chilly towards morning. Besides Grandpa never did show up last night, and I reckon I must have missed him, too. I was accordingly awake at five when Frank arrived with early morning coffee.

Son fils avait reste toute la nuit sur les planches de la petite boutique de la gallerie des liqueurs en face du pont. Le beau-frere de mon domestique, qui est mon barbier, avait conduit le petit dans son auto a cinq heures ce matin jusqu'a la casa de sa mere.

Before six, I was back in my maisonette, so marvellously fragrant with all the day and madonna lillies, and so spotless in its new and opulent hangings of white Pacific Duck. Breakfast by six, and so out into the big road. The air was still cool, although the mounting sun would soon alter the temperature. At Cypress I stopped for a moment to see the passing Army trucks, and the performances of the soldiers who were stationed at intervals along the cement highway, half hidden by the luxuriant grass and bushes that sprawled along the fences.

A car came along from the direction of town. It was Janet who stopped at the filling station for a few moments and talked with me.

I eventually went on to town, and caught the nine o'clock train back to Montrose, so that I was home in time for ten o'clock coffee and buttermilk with Aunt Cammie.

I did a little mail, and then responded to the dinner bell. Charles Mazurete and the Schuggs boy rounded out the board.

Mail, with a couple of books on Natchez from Mrs. Brandon, together with a letter from her. There was also a lovely card from Manhattan, and a grand issue of Pencil Points,--or some such publication, with marvelous illustrations of old New Orleans houses, and exquisite full pages of Louisiana plantation houses, including one of Uncle Sam before that place was taken down and of that delicious ~~wixxxx~~ little wing of Asphodel where in March Miss Kate and Miss Sarah Smith had chatted with us before their open fire.

All afternoon at my machine, with supper following afterward at six. We read from Mrs. Murray's volume on Natchez, and I drew some plans of the place for Aunt Cammie who is going over tomorrow with sister to stay at the Briars for a couple of days. It was nice to be invited to go along, but kinder on some people's perruques for me to decline.

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May 21st - Tuesday.

Five o'clock and Frank was at my bed-side, for I had promised Aunt Cammie to ride as far as Derry with her on her way to Natchez.

It was a glorious morning, much ~~gx~~ gauze-like atmosphere along Cane River which made it glissien in the oblique rays of the rising ~~sun~~, sun, for we were in the big road before six,--Davis driving us.

She will be gone until tomorrow night, and so of course we had much to talk about on the road down, and then a final goodbye, and I left the car half way between Derry and Cloutierville whence Aunt Cammie would join Sister and travel with her in her car, while Davis would pick me up on his way back to Melrose.

A motorcycle soldier came along, and stopped to talk with me. He was with some com any from New York, and asked me how ~~it~~ I liked Louisiana. I responded evasively and asked him how he found it. He said he certainly did not like it, for all he had done while he was here was to fight snakes and red bugs. I felt rather sorry for the ~~poor~~ poor boy who was sighing for a sight of Manhattan. In me, at least, he will find no competition.

Back home a little after six, and so after breakfast to my machine on which I worked steadily until noon, save for a few minutes when Celeste came over to call on me before leaving for Mansura for a couple of days. She brought me a huge big silver lovingcup filled with marvelous Easter lillies that just charged the room with fragrance.

Dinner,--quite bachelor, with Eugene, Dan, J.H. and Mr. Armour and me.

In the afternoon I walked over to call on Celine, but again found her little cabin all shut up, so I went to the Chevaliers next door, and learned that she was a-way out in the fields, hoeing cotton. At 86, I should hope she might find something more restful,--and how curious is this thing called vitality, for after all it wasn't many weeks back that poor Celine could scarcely drag herself around her little cabin.....

And so I left the package I had brought for her, and got back home in time to do a bit of watering of things before supper. Among other things I just soaked by aspiring bananas, which really seem to be making up their minds now.

Supper and more sprinkling until 7:30 when I rounded up Heinzie the sausage dog, and Monstorsity the cat who always stay with Aunt Cammie at night. I fed them upstairs in the big house, thinking that would satisfy them most, but it was obvious they new Aunt Cammie was away, for every time I would move up stairs, they would ~~bxx~~ desert their food and follow tight at my heels, apparently fearing that I might leave them upstairs. I accordingly sat down until they were done,



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but neither Heinzie or Monstrosity eat as much as usual, although the little kitten, Grandpa Junior and Half-breed, the semi Persian didn't register any loneliness,--probably because they seldom stay in the big house.

When I was ready to go over to my house, the parade was rather picture-bookish,--with white and gray Monstrosity tight at my heels, followed by Heinzie, then Grandpa, Half-breed and finally Grandpa Jr. As neither Monstrosity nor the n dog ever stay with me at night, I was rather surprised that they both scooted in the door between my legs as soon as I opened it. Grandpa was either frightened at Monstrosity's presence or a little jealous,--or possibly both,--and so he refused to come in at all,--and the other two cats I decided might well stay outside anyway.

And so a little after ~~xxxx~~ nine, I went to sleep, feeling as I had all day how soul-less and empty Melrose seems when Aunt Cammie isn't here.

May 22nd - Wednesday.

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Five o'clock and coffee, with the household inordinately quiet, what with Monstrosity sitting meekly gazing out of the front door, and Heinzie sprawled out full length along side, both seemingly content to let the World get the new day started off without either of them disturbed as to when or how the thing might be accomplished.

Six o'clock, and breakfast, with disturbing news from abroad, of a million men cut off from the allied armies, and a thrust of Nazi troupes to the sea.

Seven o'clock, and Grandpa showing up for the first time, and seeming to wonder if he would get any breakfast, now that Monstrosity has attached himself to me.

Nine o'clock and I was deep in the mail.

Ten o'clock with Frank serving coffee, and considerable exchange of confidence about one thing and another.

Twelve o'clock and news that is still disturbing, dinner and then the mail.

All afternoon I spent at my typewriter until about four when Frank got us some ice cream and we made ourselves a soda of coca-cola.

Fourthirty and Aunt Cammie returned from Natchez,--rather earlier than any of us had expected. Automatically Melrose seemed to pick up. After all the chasing around of the past ~~xxxx~~ two days that she had been doing to enable Sister to see the sights of the town, she seemed to be as hail and hearty as ever,--amazing woman.

It was interesting to hear of the people she had seen,--many of whom I had run across last week,--Mrs. Ferriday Byrnes, Mrs. Brandon, Mary Lambdin, etc., etc. She had heard some tales which I hadn't heard while I was there, and some confirming what I had. Then, too, the usual German spy tales that inevitably spring up when times are such as they are,--for instance, that Mrs. Swann had German spies hidden in the belvedere of Homewood last year, etc., etc. Just why she would have them or why they should want to be there wasn't made clear.

Six o'clock and dinner or rather supper, and seven o'clock for half an hour at watering my pet garden hopefuls, banana plants, nicotena, etc.

Eight o'clock and a conversation by telephone with Robina in Shreveport regarding our Proposed frolic in Windy Hill Manor, meeting Lyle in town as he arrives from New Orleans. . And then half an hour more of conversation,--more for the pleasure of enjoying our get to gether again than anything in particular, - and so goodnight.



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May 23rd - Thursday.

At last it rained,--which seems like a long time for this season since April 30th. All night it came down gently,--or at least I suppose it did for I slept soundly from eight o'clock until four when Grandpa came fumbling at the screen door and the old rooster in the pear tree crowed, as usual, with all his might.

Fine o'clock and the day got under way, with plenty of mail to be batted out and much notations to be made.

Aunt Cammie came over for coffee at ten and we talked much of Louisiana and Mississippi history. We did quite a lot of laughing, in fact, about things that go on in Natchez. She had heard that one of the Pilgrimage Clubs expects to put Jenny Merrill's house on the tour next year. This naturally got us around to the subject of Duncan Minor, whom, according to many on the know, declare killed Jenny,--or at least had the poor colored man do it.

Duncan was famous in Natchez for his curious avarice, although he had plenty of money. The tale is old that after buying shingles for Oakwood, the family home, he let them rot down to nothing to avoid the cost of having them put on the house, so that his poor mother died in a great four poster under an umbrella around which pans were tilted to catch the rain as it cascaded down the clud-burster. But this is a tale which happens more recently, and is perhaps less well known. For a long time back there had been the question of having modern plumbing installed in Oakwood but Duncan turned thumbs down on the cost, preferring to save money by keeping the outside toilet. Like so many of the other little buildings about Oakwood, he refused to have it repaired when it was really reaching a precarious state. But time marched on, and the mills of the Gods began to grind exceedingly fine, for one day, Duncan visited this convenience, and to his astonishment and dismay, the whole thing caved in while he was closeted there. He fell through the seat and flooring, and with the top sagging from above, he discovered that there he was entrapped in this unsavory plight without the physical strength to get himself out of it. There he stewed in his own juice, so to speak, for four hours, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that he was ultimately pried out. I don't know the particulars about the deodorants that followed, etc., etc., but I find the whole piece a remarkable counterpart to the whole Rabelian piece that rounds out the whole goat castle episode.

Dinner and the mail, and again at work at my typewriter until three when I took to the road, the rain having ceased. I went around to call on Zeline, and found her deep in her wash tub, chatting with some nice fat lady who lives hard by who seemed as kindly and gay as Zeline, which is remarkable. Joe was home too,--the rain having made work in the cotton field impossible, and so together we chatted for an hour. I started back for "elrose when I noticed some black

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clouds began rooling in the West. I got as far as the bridge easily, but just as I reached Cane River bridge, the skies opened and the rain descended in torrents. In an instant I was soaked, but I just kept marching along, for somehow there is a certain pleasure to feel the existence of a medium like a drenching rain that somehow established such a decided transition between heaven and earth.

It was good to feel the cool rain and notice the flapping of my sopping wet blue shirt, worrying in the breeze like a dorsel in a storm. My white duck trousers were soon plastered to my legs like curious old fashioned outting under-grawers, and they formed a marvelous conduit for the rain that shortly began cascading into my shoes. A car passed by slowly, and the people in it must have thought I was out of mind to be wondering along so gayly in a down-pour. Maybe they were right, but I was enjoying it,--which is one thing.

Back home, I shaved and bathed a-new, in the midst of which I heard a terrific racket from the chickens. A few minutes later Frank appeared to lay out my clothes for me. He was giggling, and said that at last he had caught all the roosters and hens which had forsaken their night roost in the pear tree for a temporary shelter in the lattice work below the back gallery. Aunt Cammie for days has been telling him to take some of those chicken home with him for his own dinner, but the four o'clock rooster was always too wild to be caught. From this point on, I reckon I shall pass four o'clock by without the usual morning serenade.

In a few minutes the supper bell ran, and I forgot and went to the dining room. This afternoon, when we received a telegram from Lyle cancelling the Windy Hill Manor tea for this week, Aunt Cammie was superintending the moving of things from the Winter dining room to the Summer one. I like it out there, and during supper it was good to note a beautiful rainbow, heralding a brighter day on the morrow.

We read from Mrs. Murray's book on Natchez until 7:45 when I said goodnight, and alone, for I couldn't find Grandpa, I went over to Lyle's house and had leaped into bed and pulled the covers over my head before eight.



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May 25th - Friday.

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A delicious dawn, cool and evenly spread with silvery gray across a curtain that in an hour or so would be gilded with a rising sun. It was good to lie in my great four poster, thinking of nothing in particular but just content to register the noble gradations of the dawn and be lulled by the extraordinary vibrancy of hundreds of waking birds that sang in unbelievable orchestrations away in the rare trees and shrubs that entangle the almost formal garden that surrounds this little kingdom of Lyle's house beyond the picket fence in the front.

Five fifteen and Frank appeared with coffee. After lighting my cigarette, he stood by my bedside, gazing with me out into the white garden beyond the back gallery of the house. A little rabbit was nibbling at clover in the center of the great greensward, and each time we spoke, he would automatically raise his head, listen for a moment and then resume his breakfast.

As I sipped my first cup of the delicious Louisiana brew, we spoke of things that were close to Frank's heart, and we wondered at the make-up of man and how for years he could shed tears over the trials that his loved ones could bring about, and how, after a while, there were no more tears to shed, and how then we somehow dis-associated ourselves from the intimacy of the heart-throb and gradually, by way of gaining an equilibrium to keep us on our appointed course, we could begin to smile, and even end by laughing at those stabs at the heart which once had been so laden with sorrow but eventually seemed to lose all their potency to blight.

Six o'clock and I was at my little maisonette, enjoying my breakfast of grapefruit, bacon and eggs, toast and coffee. By seven I was out in the open road for a good walk while the air was still cool.

I was back home again by ten, hoping to have coffee with Aunt Cammie. I discovered that others had beaten me to it, for she was already entertaining people in the library and so I withdrew and got to work on my mail.

Twelve o'clock and dinner, with the mail arriving with demitasse. There were nice books from Manhattan, including Men of Spine, being a collection of biographical sketches of Mississippians, and a volume on Virginia, illustrated by Suydam which the latter had sent Aunt Cammie.

Two o'clock and we listened to King George make his Empire Day speech, and so back to my typewriter, until five.

I then joined Aunt Cammie who was transplanting tobacco or nicotiana plants which she had raised from the seed sent her by the boys in Texas.

Six o'clock and supper with Celeste and her Mother arriving just as we were finishing. Mrs. Rigard has just returned from

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May 25th - Friday - concluded.

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from Kentucky, and we chatted until seven.

After that we read from Mrs. Murray's book on Natchez and were delighted and surprised in reading the account of Wm. R. Dunbar Shields to run across the name of Joseph Dunbar and "Aunt" Olivia Macgruder Dunbar who had informally adopted Wm. Shields as a youth.

There was much to be said about the various virtues of Mrs. Shields but I must say I think she was pretty short-sighted when in 1863 she went out of her way to show her repugnance to the Federal Flag, and so brought down upon herself and her family the vengeance of the Natchez Federal Commander who ordered her out of the town within 24 hours and the Shields home,--The Bird's Nest demolished. I wouldn't know so much about that old line about it sometimes is nothing short of wisdom to be not always wise, but I certainly think Mrs. Shields stuck her neck out in this particular instance.

Eight~~ten~~ o'clock, and we said goodnight, and picking up Grandpa at our house, we came together over to Lyle's and were asleep and dreaming before nine.



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May 25th - Saturday.

Another beautiful, cool, clear morning. I awoke at four but listened in vain for the call of the old red rooster that used to proclaim the dawn from the scraggly pear tree hard by the big house. I guess Frank must have taken him home alright.

A smooth, velvet like breeze flitted languidly in from the white garden at the back gallery and gentled meandered out the front gallery beyond which the tall blue and white ~~xx~~ phlox swayed slowly back and forth. Slowly and far away the plantation shounds be-stired themselves,--dogs barking for their breakfasts, muffled rich negro voices laughingly getting the mules under way, with the more remote sound of a truck as it rumbled across Cane River bridge. Hard by the birds were borrowing an idea from Browning,--"the year's at the Spring and day's at the dawn". I closed my eyes again and almost dozed, half remembering van Dyke's: "T is then a wandering breeze awakes and runs from tree to tree, and borrows words from all the birds to sound the Reveillie".

Five o'clock and Frank appeared, his fresh pale blue shirt and blue overalls fitting him so nicely and somehow so perfectly complementing the same toml value of his soft chocolate coloring,--with the silver tray bearing its white cup and saucer and the little white sugar bowl seeming to give just the proper contrast to the carefully brushed straight black hair that somehow enhances the value of his kindly eyes.

It is so good to start the day with Frank and to laugh a little about nothing at all as he pours the black coffee and lights my cigarette. Grandpa who had been sleeping on my feet, stood up, half a leap, stretched by arching his back high, and at the same time reversing his tail to glorify the line, and then curled up again, simulating sleep on my knees. Frank leaned over and whispered in Grandpa's ear but Grandpa merely waved it back and forth once or twice and tucked his nose under his paw. Loving Frank and Grandpa as I do, I must say this is the way I like to start the day.

All morning I worked at my typewriter, save for half an hour at coffee time when Aunt Cammie came to share it with me. In spite of the fact that she hadn't slept well, she fairly radiated the impression of energy and good health, and even as I walked back to the big house to lay her down on her divan for a half hours rest, she still seemed to rested that I couldn't help marveling at the vigor and energy this remarkable soul can transmit to others. No wonder everyone marvels at her vast capacity for affection and accordingly adores her.

Dinner at twelve, with Faine and Charles in addition to the usual places at the board. The mail was notable for its absence of interest.

I worked all afternoon save for an hour for coffee and dessert with Aunt Cammie in her room. As Frank was serving, conversation got around to plantation doings, and Aunt Cammie brought up the matter of old Madame Balthasar's pigs. She lives down the road a piece, and not far from Henry's place, and it is to Henry's cotton

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patch that Mme. B's pigs travel, to root out rows of cotton, now about three inches high. Henry, it seems, as asked her to pen up her pigs but she refuses to do so. At this point Aunt Cammie took a hand in the matter. She spoke to Rita, telling her to remind her Grandmother, Mme. B., that when she burned down, everyone contributed their bit to help her rebuild and refurnish her cabin, and the least she can do now is to keep her pigs from over-running her neighbor's cotton patches. Now it would appear that Mme. B., has not been impressed by this line of argument, and so Aunt Cammie told Frank to warn her again, and then if she doesn't respond, to get some buck shot and shoot at a pig and see if that will have any effect. I shall never cease to be amazed at the efficacy of a shot in bringing negroes into line yet seemingly without leaving any trace of reprisal ~~xxxxxx~~ in its wake.

This recalls to mind an episode that happened during the past year in Natchez which I may or may not have recorded. It was a mild feud that developed between Pierce Butler at Laurel Hill and the Mazique's at the old Railey Place,--so beautifully described by Ingraham in 1835 as possessing one of the loveliest gardens in the South. It seems that pigs from the Mazique place got into the gardens of Laurel Hill. P. Butler shut them up and charged the Maziques two dollars a head to get them back. They paid it under protest, but vowed to get even. Later when the Rural Electrification Power lines were running through that section, it was imperative that they cross the 900 acre place of the Maziques if they were to reach the Butler place. The Mazique's put their foot down and said: "Nothing doing". Pierce Butler, when it appeared they were adamant, pleaded, wept and cajoled but to no avail. The Maziques would show him a trick or two, and never would he get any electricity. The up-shot of the whole affair was that Jeff Lambdin eventually persuaded the Maziques to let the power lines cross their property but not until Pierce Butler had been kept on the hot griddle for weeks.

Six o'clock and supper adte which Frank and I planted some gords while Aunt Cammie was transplanting sweet basil. At seven we read from men of spine, finding it a good collection of sketches of prominent Mississippians, but incorporating some of the usual errors or mis-leading statements. For instance, the author speaks of Sargent Prentice as being buried "beside or on the banks of the Mississippi" which is scarcely true, since the graveyard at Gloster is miles from the River which can't be seen for miles from that place. He also has buried Winthrop Sargent in the same burial ground while in reality only the monument of Sargent is there, for Sargent died at sea and was buried there. Surely these details are of no importance and yet I must say they give a little different impression than the actualities would suggest.

Eight o'clock and we said goodnight. I found Grandpa waiting for me, and together we traveled across the formal plot in front of the African house, heavy and mysterious against the light gray, star-be-spattered sky, and so through the wicket gate, and to bed in Lyle's house.



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May 26th - Sunday.

A quiet day at home. If the "ixteenth "ouis were entering it in his diary, I reckon he would instinctively jot down: "Nothing", as was his custom, even on the 14th of "uly, 1789,--and so far as I know, today was void of anything that would suggest a crash of a Bastille.

It was five thirty when Frank arrived, and I didn't rush between coffee and breakfast, for the air was almost too cool and the sky sombered by sagging gray clouds that seemed to promise snow or rain.

I worked at my machine until nine, when I made a little tour of the gardens, and ended up by pulling balck-eyed Susans in Lyle's front garden until ten when Aunt "ammie joined me for coffee.

As al ays there was much to be discussed, with one scarcely knowing where to begin, for the hours that pass in sleep somehow stretch into years when one invariably finds such a stimulant for conversation as Aunt "ammie always inspires.

Rita is ill today and so "unt "ammie will have to do without a maid. Frank accordingly came to Lyle's house to tidy up my room, and somehow through some question "unt "ammie put to him, we all got to talking Plantation, "unt "ammie, asking Frank to sit down. About that time, "McKinley arrived with the coffee tray. Frank saw him as he entered the picket gate, and I couldn't help grinning as I noticed Frank hurried to regain his chair. "Naturally McKinley radiated amazement when he found Frank sitting with us in the library. In fact he was so astonished he even forgot to say "oodmorning. "his little gesture is exactly what "McKinley needs, for he is altogether too prone to carry little tales about Frank going to the "other side of the river",--implying that he is at the saloon, when in reality Aunt "ammie has the upmost trust in Frank, knowing full well that if Frank goes to the saloon it may be for meat, for ice cream,--all for the big house,--or possibly for a drink for himself,--which is alright with "unt "ammie, since Frank is the most faithful servant God ever made.

Shortly after coffee, "r. and "rs. "reschelle called and Aunt Cammie spent an hour with them, talking flowers, micro-film, typewriters, etc. No sooner had they gone than various "enry children blew in. It was raining now, and so I was contented to remain at my machine in solitary satisfaction until dinner.

I resumed my work after dinner, and stuck to it until four when "unt "ammie came to have coffee and desert with me, while her daughter and husband slept in Aunt "ammie's room. At four thirty I resumed my work but "arry came to see me and confide some of his little problems to me. "hortly after came supper, and by six o'clock Aunt "ammie and I were alone. "e read aloud until seven and then said goodnight, Aunt "ammie being exhausted. I lished to the "resident's re-armament speech at 8:30 and so to bed.

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May 26th - S

It lloks to me as though there were something more wrong with this machine than the ribbon, although " may be wrong.

It 's a little staggering, ut never the less true. The only truly American architecture in the great "atchez houses is Longwood, the one place all writers have united to calssify as "oorish,-- Lots of them have called it "the "oorish "astle". "hen you stop to think of the Moorish castles you have have seen, " reckon you will recall few if any that in the vaguest manner resembles "ongwood. Possibly the Moorish u



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May 27th - Monday.

Hal over-cast skies,--no blue showing through but with flimsy clouds suggesting that they might either drop down rain or evaporate into the sunshine that tried so hard to struggle through.

I worked on mail until ten o'clock when Aunt Cammie came to have ~~breakfast~~ coffee with me.

We spent a half hour, too, in transcribing documents which Mrs. Brandon had sent us, including copies of Eliza Lloyd Macgruder's will and that of Aunt Olivia Dunbar. I was particularly interested in noting to whom Aunt Olivia will certain slaves with whom I had become acquainted through Eliza's diary. Her servant, Alfred, who must have been everything that Frank is to Elrose, went to Joseph Dunbar Shields.

Twelve o'clock and little mail, save for a volume or two, including Phillips American Negro Slavery which we are going to get a lot of good out of.

I worked all afternoon until four thirty, when Aunt Cammie came to listen with me to the European broadcasts on the war situation. We chatted, too, along the lines that Henry had outlined to me a little earlier in the afternoon.

His problem is one that roils but can scarcely be done anything about. A man who rents a camp from J. A. on Cane River, asked Henry to do some carpentry work for him, saying that he would be glad to pay him what carpenters in town charge. Henry worked from Monday to Thursday, inclusive, and put in a bill at the store for eight dollars and seventy five cents. When J. A. saw it, he said it was altogether too much, and cut it down to three dollars, explaining to Henry that the man was one of his,--J.H.'s best friends. Henry countered with the statement that the friendship cut little ice, since the man had asked him to do it and was willing to pay town charges anyway. But Henry was allowed only three dollars for these four days work.

It is said that J. A. is having a mild row with his wife, Celest over her Mother, Mrs. Regard who is visiting them. Not liking Henry, it appears J. A. must be taking his "mad" out on Henry, which obviously is contemptable. Aunt Cammie felt the same way, naturally, but will adjust her course to bridge the whole matter so that Henry will not loose, but I reckon Henry will not be likely to forget.

Supper and a drizzling rain. We accordingly ~~for~~ got in some extra reading, mostly from Shield's history of Natchez which is parts seemed unbelievably flippant. We did run across the name of Dr. Speed, however, who may have been some kin to Cassandra Foster who married a Speed. This is the first time I ever heard of the name in Natchez history. Eight o'clock and goodnight.

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May 28th - Tuesday.

Wakening was sweet this morning, for last night I had placed a little bowl of cape jasmin,--gardenias,--on the console beside my bed.

Before seven, I had plunged through my shower and Grandpa, Grandpa, Jr., and I had downed our goodly breakfasts, and I was in the big road.

The Montrose lane is almost a study in landscape gardening, so far as borders are concerned, for there are miles of tiny white and yellow daisies growing in profusion on either edge of the road and just behind them and rising six or eight inches higher are equally endless rows of black-eyed Susans. I smiled to myself as I thought how children in the North prize these latter flowers while in Louisiana one has to combat them to keep them from taking the regular gardens.

I guess the War Games must be about over, for along the cement highway scores and scores of great military camions past me. I was back at Elrose by ten, bringing an express package with me from Montrose,--books which had been bound in Texas for the library. I found that Aunt Cammie had gone to call on Madame Aubert-Occque, and so I had coffee alone and got on with my mail.

Before dinner I wandered down to the bridge, and discovered that the large detachment of troops which had been camping along Cane River in Zeline's neighborhood were still with us, having moved down to the saloon. Dozens of them were disporting themselves in the river, using the bridge as a spring board for many of their aquatic exhibitions. One of my colored friends tells me that many of the boys are paying court to the members of a little cabin a little ways up the river. The mulatto father is dead drunk, while the wife and daughter are dispensing hospitality with a certain abandon. Among other things the soldiers are carrying the daughter about the cabin on their shoulders. The daughter is said to have remarked to her mother that the latter cannot complain as to the young woman's mood of diversion, since the Mother herself has done what she could to provide any kind of entertainment which the soldiers felt called upon to suggest by way of physical exercise. It had never before occurred to me what a wide field War Games do cover.

Back home by 11:30, I listened to the news from abroad,--the surrender of the Belgian Army by King Leopold and the consequent disaster that hangs over the heads of the French and British troops in the Flander's Section. I don't hear anything about the Duke of Windsor who was with this Army the last I knew.

Dinner and the mail, with a card from Mrs. Moore from New York, regretting that her visit should have been at a time when I was not there.

Two o'clock at it began pouring. Sister came, and took Aunt Cammie to Magnolia plantation to call on Sally Hertzog. I went along but didn't call at Magnolia,--going on instead to Cloutierville. I rode with Harry on the



May 28th - Tuesday - concluded.

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with Harry on the back seat. He spoke casually enough of a milk snake which the Dr. F had shot that morning in Harry's bedroom over the garage.

With the rain still pouring, we picked up Aunt Ammie after half an hour or so and returned to Elrose.

I continued working at my typewriter until supper time, after which Aunt Ammie and I read from Shield's History of Natchez until eight when we said goodnight.

May 29th - Thursday.

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Grandpa stayed with me all night. It was cozy to awaken around four o'clock, feel him at my feet, breathe deeply of the cape jasmine on the little console beside my bed, listen to the rain outside, and then wander off into sleep.

Five fifteen and Frank arrived with the coffee. It had stopped raining by then but snatches of clouds piled one on another kept out the blue, with the suggestion that occasional rains might fall during the day.

I spent all my morning at my typewriter, save for the coffee hour, and an eleven thirty broadcast detailing various accounts of Leopold's surrender of the Belgian Army.

Dinner at twelve, and we heard more details of what Frank had already told us at coffee time. Elmer's husband has been captured in Jackson, Mississippi, and will be brought to Natchitoches for trial. I reckon it will be a short one, for he killed a man in the saloon here at the end of the bridge. Even though the man may have deserved killing, Elmer's husband certainly committed an unforgivable sin by doing it, since Elmer's husband is black and the man he killed was white. As near as I can make out, the world will lose little, either by the death of the first or the execution of the second.

Demi-tasse and the mail which was fat and just as I would always have it, but in reality much nicer than I could have anticipated. There was a grand long letter from New York which I had long hoped for but didn't exactly expect, and there was one from Line Ridge which pleased me much.

We lingered for a while, speaking of Audubon and his stay in the environs of St. Francisville, of the Cottage, of Oakley and other places. The sun was shining brightly outside but it was deliciously cool in the summer dining room's shade. The birds sang with all their hearts in the flowering bushes outside. It was the kind of a noon's repast I like best,--especially the dessert.

About one, Aunt Ammie was up and away, leaving with Dan to drive to Washington, D.C., to look over the old furniture and to bring home the glass domed clock.

I accordingly concentrated on my typewriter and turned out quite a few pages before coffee time at three. After serving me, Frank asked: "Is I worryin' you?"--a question I am not yet accustomed to although Harry had asked me the same thing last Sunday when he called on me. Elsewhere people would ask: "Am I disturbing you?" or "Am I bothering you?" but here it is always "Is I worryin' you?" I hope I never get used to that phrase, for I find it has arresting as a unexpectedly good mint julep.

I ~~think~~ assured Frank he never worried me, and so together



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and so we chatted for a few minutes while I drank my coffee, and in chatting we settled a couple of problems that really were only problems because one hadn't had an opportunity to discuss them.

A little after three, I walked for a ways toward the bridge when I saw Frank on his horse. As we chatted again for a moment, we encountered Marvin, a youth of some 17 or 18 summers who is going to do some dictating for me. He seems like a nice boy,-- rather darker than Frank with quite a bend toward business, I imagine, and may therefore be rather good in applying himself to a speed in reading that will harmonize with my efforts on a typewriter. I asked him not to let Joe know that he is going to read to me, too, for I don't want Joe to realize that his attempts are not all that are required for material that has to be given with precision.

I continued on my way across the bridge and on to Aeline's, where I found her over the washtub, just as I had last Friday. I guess it was, when I visited her last and got soaked in the bargain.

She relinquished her tub temporarily, and sat down to talk with Leon's mother,--a remarkably young looking woman and me. There were seven little barefoot boys playing around the place, and one of these brought out a chair for "company". Shortly after I arrived, it started to rain a little, and so Zeline called her chickens into the house and fed them to keep them from getting wet. I think her intention was to safe-guard the health of the little baby chicks, but when the older ones responded to her call, she saw to it that they all had something. While Leon's mother and I chatted, Aeline proceeded to make us some lemonade, and this time we all three shared, with the seven little boys sitting about and eyeing our glasses with yearning. Aeline explained to them in French that they would get theirs when we were done.

The little shower passed by, and so I said good by, taking with me the bottle shaped little fish which had contained cod liver oil, which Aunt Ammie sends to Zeline from time to time.

Back home and my bath, and supper at six, with only J.H., Eugene and I to grace the board,--Aunt Ammie not having returned. Afterward, I fed Grandpa and Grandpa Jr., and then went over to the big house and fed Heinzie, Monstorsity and Alf-breed, and then listened to the radio until nine thirty, when I thought it time to go to bed, although I had greatly enjoyed the various programmes, including one about Pointe Coupee Parish during which was described Austerlitz plantation in that Parish, the house having been built in 1835 by a mulatto who, being rich, had lived for a while in Paris, married a French woman, and then returned to Louisiana to build that lovely place which he continued to occupy until after the War, when he went back to Paris to die. I must learn more particulars about this house, which I understand is still occupied by descendants.

Grandpa joined me on the way to Lyle's gate, and together we were in bed by ten.

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May 30th - Thursday.

Decoration Day, and as beautiful as it should be for such a holiday.

According to the radio, parades are the order of the day in Washington and New York, but somehow I believe some other date for Decoration must be celebrated in Louisiana, for I don't hear anything about special festivities in this locality. Perhaps everyone joins the negroes in holding everything for a big frolic on Emancipation Day,--the 16th of June, when all the black people knock off for picnics and frolics while the mulattoes work from morning to night on that day, no matter if they chance to be sick or well, since they must thus proclaim to the world that they never were slaves, and accordingly have no reason to celebrate.

I thought the day especially appropriate to do a little floral decorating myself, and so with Grandpa and Grandpa Jr., trailing behind me,--and each stepping gingerly in the dew-laden grass, I accumulated a huge bouquet of dahlias, running from pure white to deepest red. This was the color section, and to it I supplemented another vase filled to overflowing with cape jasmine - gardenias - as they call them up North, and these lent the perfume which the dahlias lacked.

Aunt Ammie came over early to tell me of her trip to Washington, D.C., the purchase of the glass domed clock, and the inquiry regarding the paper weight which was made up of three transparent glass balls on which a fourth deep red glass one sat. She had stopped in Alexandria on her way back, and had seen the movie of Rebecca which seems to be enjoying considerable popularity at the moment.

We chatted until eleven when I finished my mail just before dinner.

There was good mail with demi-tasse, and this of course called for responses which I undertook immediately after dinner, working on it until after four o'clock, with only fifteen minutes of respite for coffee.

Supper, and much talk about quinine. We are all going to begin taking it right away as the weather gets warmer and the insect department seems to be working over time. I suppose malaria really kills lots of people, although the only two I ever happen to hear of were Aunt Ammie's mother who had never had it until she was over 90, although it was the cause of her death at 95. Then there was the first Mrs. Jefferson Davis who is buried near the cottage at St. Francisville. With an almost total absence of quinine during the Confederate War, I reckon there must have been plenty of people who succumbed to malaria and a whole lot more who were made so languid that even War must have seemed of only secondary consideration. What a pity that the Government this year has to dump four billion dollars into battleships and what not when such a small part of that money could effectively eradicate the cause of all the ills that follow in the train of the malaria mosquito....We read for a little while but said goodnight early and Grandpa and I were in bed before the sunset had completely died out.



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May 31st - Friday.

Another beautifully balanced temperature,--neither too hot nor too cold, but pleasantly cool in the early morning and late evening, with a the noonday sun sufficiently warm to make the shade seem a pleasant decoration that is sufficient unto itself without consideration of necessity or value.

At five as I drank my first cup of coffee, Frank and I could again see the little cotton tail munching clover on the a lawn of the white garden. We talked of the intelligence of these little animals and wondered if their children gave them as much consideration as people's do not.

Six o'clock and Grandpa and I were over at our maisonette, having our breakfast and listening to radio news-casts of the British retreat from Alnders. The food was delicious but I must say the news wasn't especially.

All morning I worked at my machine, with a bracing interlude at coffee time when Aunt Ammie joined me. She had quite a lot of fun running over domestic affairs and particularly the dissention that smoulders in the Kitchen where Mackinley appears to be dying for an excuse to quit in order that he may go to work for Frenchy at his saloon and restaurant up the river a ways. I reckon that the present situation will not long obtain, for excuses really aren't hard to find if one really set his mind to it.

Twelve o'clock and Charles came in from Little River for dinner. Paine graced the board, too. There was much talk about war and various slants on the news as presented by various announcers. Paine said he wouldn't listen to Kaltenborn because he is a German. I think it was John Raskine who once observed that "just as we get people civilized, somebody always insists on going on a picnic".

At one I went over to Felix Mettoy's for a hair cut. Frank had told him I was coming, and he was waiting for me at his gate. I suppose Felix is about 35, rather tall and thin with a manner that obviously is determined to please. He lives with his wife and mother and father, I believe, although I saw only the mother when I was there. She reminded me of Madame Aubert Cocque.

As at Felix Laurenz's, Felix Mettoy seated me on the front gallery of his house. The prospect is beautiful from there, looking toward the west, and out over the river which lies some fifty feet below is front garden. It is perhaps a quarter of a mile from the main road, and is reached by a turn-row that leads from Cane River bridge along the river which is heavily planted here with vines. Although it is fully as charming a spot as my other barber's, and much more rural, with no danger of a vagrant priest performing in the front yard as his vast ability to turn a ear around fast to impress the victim of the shears and no likelihood of a nun silently but relentlessly blowing in to ransack the garden of its flowers.

When Felix had sheared me, we sat for a few minutes on the gallery and smoked a lucky together, and then

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I stepped into the house to speak with his mother for a few moments. She was sitting in an ordinary rocking chair, partially covering her mouth with her hand, for I imagine she must have recently had her teeth out from the lisp with which she spoke. The floor, as so frequently appears in these mulatto houses, was spotless, and a double bed in the room looked as snowy as any I have ever seen. Along side the bed stood a religious dodad of some kind. It was about two feet square and possibly three feet high, surmounted by a wooden cross in the same material.

of wood that formed the frame work enclosing the glass sides. I couldn't see the little figures inside the case, but they seemed to be doll-like affairs, possibly some 6 or 7 inches tall, and were probably of a religious nature. I must make a closer inspection when I call on the old woman as I shall do shortly.

All afternoon the slight breeze kept gently moving, and on my return to Melrose, I found Frank in back of the African house, where I asked him to join me in the swing, where we sat for an hour gazing out over the green formal lawn toward the hedge at the fence marking the end of the garden and the beginning of the cotton fields where we shall one day build our Marie Antoinette lake.

A quarter of three, and many passed by, stopping for a moment to chat with us. It was coffee time, however, and Frank left to prepare it, while I went with Henry to Pyle's back gallery where he and I worked on treasure for a couple of hours.

Five o'clock and a bath, with news from Europe following afterward. Supper at six, and so to reading with Aunt Ammie until eight when we both said goodnight, and I picked up Grandpa at my house and together we went to Pyle's to sleep.



June 1st. - Saturday. [1940]

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Grandpa let himself out at five o'clock but within a few minutes was knocking at the screen door to come back in with me. It took him about ten minutes before he could have done with his "schmuzzing" and get settled. I expected Frank momentarily, but closed my eyes for a moment, and of course went sound asleep, not awakening until 5:30 when I discovered that he had been in with his coffee tray, and left again leaving a gift which Aunt "ammie had purchased for me on the preceding day but had kept to work on after I had left last night. I was enchanted, and leaped out of bed and tried on all three and found them good.

Six o'clock and Grandpa and I were at our house when Frank arrived with my breakfast tray, giggling the while that he had succeeded in slipping in and out of the house while I slept.

By seven I was in the Montrose "ane, and after walking for three miles, a school bus, devoid of its usual passengers, stopped and offered me a ride. I went as far as town, catching the train back as far as Montrose.

And so home again by ten, and coffee with Aunt "ammie and some reading from the Journal of "issippi "istory concerning various "aries, "ount "istories, etc. which we will eventually try to borrow.

Twelve o'clock with dinner and the mail, which was fairly heavy but with nothing of a personal nature for me, although several joint notes to both Aunt "ammie and me,--all of which were distinctive for their unsettled tone, some of them almost stilted, it seemed, and much of them having to do with the anticipation of what happens next,--particularly in "merica--as the Nazi's continue their successes in Europe.

I worked at my machine all afternoon, save for a few minor changes I made in furniture, etc. Coffee at three and ice cream at four,--Frank having ridden to the saloon for the dessert.

Aunt "ammie came over to see some of the color I had introduced at the windows, and later we went around to the front garden, looking over the cape jasmin when a car stopped in front of the gate. It was a couple of Brazeale women,--mother and daughter, from town, dragging a couple of scatter brained women with them,--light weights from Indianapolis, I believe they said. The elder Braezeale woman looks much like Helen Westley, and is remarkably well preserved. I believe Aunt "ammie told me that the woman was a widow with four children when Aunt "ammie was 14 years old. I should have guessed she might be about 65. The younger woman bearing the same name didn't seem at all dampened by Aunt "ammie's reserve, but started off with her two guests to look the place over. But her mission was a rather fruitless one, for as soon as she reached the back gardens and pointed out the African house,--the like of which I suppose doesn't exist in "merica, one of her guests remarked that she would much rather look for four leaf clovers that see anything by way of flowers, old buildings or anything else, and with her companion, began searching

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for these phenomena, wholly unmindful of her guide or of me. I accordingly shooed them all out to the front garden and soon they were on their way.

\* Supper followed, and Aunt "ammie and I read until eight.

J'etis au lit a huit heures et demi. A neuf heure et demi, quelqu'un me dit: "C'est moi". Un peu bouleverse, j'ai trouve mes pantoufles a ma chemise. On parle des choses un peu different comme la verite de mon domestique. Cose curieuse, ce galopin qui avait recu plus des considerations des blancs que personne, neanmoins incapable de faire rien avec tous ces bountees.



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June 2nd, - Sunday.

Four thirty and the dawn as cool, mellow and profound as the vanishing landscapes in the Italian Renaissance Paintings which some how gave just the proper balance of quiet to the animation of the portrait portrayed in the foreground. I have often wondered how those landscapes in the background appeared when the painting had just been completed and if the present day effect was present when the picture was fresh from the brush of Leonardo or if the patina given the picture by time has increased the subtle mood. In any event, these glorious Louisiana dawns are so much like the Renaissance dawns as we view them in the old canvasses today that contemplation of alterations by Time scarcely merits contemplation.

Three fifteen and morning coffee. Frank seemed so happy with details of his nocturnal visitor that I hadn't the heart to point out how at variance was the picture sketched for him with that which had been so ably sketched for me. Besides, the story as told to me may easily have been false, as I recognized certain unimportant details to be, and so it may be possible that his happiness is based on a more solid foundation than it would appear to be from my point of view, and this hope is true with all my heart.

A little after seven, when breakfast was over, I made a round of the white garden to gather a bouquet of regal lilies for the tall porcelaine vase, and shortly afterward Aunt Mammie, looking amazingly rested came to pass some time with me before the day got under way. Someday I must record a flock of her astonishing attributes but at the moment I most note how bubbling over with enthusiasm for life and gaiety, and how marvelously she radiates youthful exuberance after a night when the Sandman has visited her early and sleep has been kind.

For an hour or so, she dictated to me from Mississippi historical papers, as yet unpublished, stopping only with the arrival of guests. Sister came at about ten, and engaged me in conversation on the stone bench in the formal garden where we took coffee. She was full of talk about questions concerning Matchez, wanting to know if Jane White's sister killed her on the night Jane occupied Arlington back in 1825, and whether it was the mother or grandmother of the present women of Richmond who begot two children by the colored coachman of the family, etc., etc.

Ten thirty, and I began work at my typewriter, continuing thereon until dinner at noon. Conversation at the board revolved for the most part around the War and Carrier and Ves, with Aunt Mammie asking me to tell the story of the Laurers whom I had known in New York, and of the old man,--Louis Laurer, who had died a few years ago at the age of one hundred and three, after having passed a most interesting life, including labor on the old Carriers and Ves Prints when they were in their hey-day.

Dinner done, I started toward my maisonette when I noticed some sheep in the basse-cour and woodlot. I immediately had heart-failure for the well being of my banana plants, and upon investi-

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gation discovered that the sheep had nibbled off the tops of them. What with the stallion tromping them down at the time of their planting and the sheep trimming them now that they are a foot high, I reckon my hedge of bananas is headed for adversity this season.

When Frank came with three o'clock coffee, we united in our efforts to drive the sheep into the lot whence they had strayed when someone had carelessly left the gate open. I continued at my typewriter until five when we had supper and the guests departed.

Aunt Mammie and I ten made a little tour of the gardens, and before we were done, Aunt Mammie had picked me a huge bouquet of Confederate lilies,--somewhat like Easter lilies and in a way suggesting chrysanths, with the flowers all white save for a streak, possibly a quarter of an inch wide running through the center of the petal to the outer edge,--the stripe being like an umbered lavender as nearly as I could make out. I placed them in a huge silver loving-cup, and instantly they filled the room with a fragrance that was excessively sweet.

From quarter to seven, when Aunt Mammie talked with Hobina in Shreveport, we read from old Mississippi historical notes until eight, when we said good night, and without Grandpa, whom I couldn't find, whom I couldn't find, I went to Lyle's house and was in bed before the last light of the dying day had gone out.



June 3rd - Monday.

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Dawn in duplication of yesterday's. I like it.

But coffee was vaguely different because Frank, in stead of his usual blue costume, was pleasingly garbed in in soft gray Sunday clothes. I wonder what's in the offing. Heaven forbid that it may be further difficulties with the off-spring.

Eight thirty and Aunt Cammie, looking as fresh as a daisy, came over to spend the morning with in m in dictation. We sped also fairly fast until nine thirty when the ten o'clock coffee came in the form of a pitcher of lemonade and a pitcher of butter milk. Fifteen minutes off for a cigarette and then back to work until eleven thirty when we both knocked off, Aunt Cammie going to lie down for a few minutes before dinner, and I to concentrate on my typewriter to whack off a mail quota which didn't amount to much.

Dinner and some nice mail afterwards, including notes from Hobina, Mary, rs. Brandon, Adolph etc., but nothing from New York and only silence from the Islands.

At one, I listened to the news broadcasts of the damage wrought by a couple of hundred German planes that bombed Paris at noon day, and an account of British-Italian relations, in which the newscaster in all seriousness reported that "England, in considering Italian demands, is bending over backward to meet the Italians half way". It certainly sounded to me as though the Italians were sneaking up from behind.

We worked all afternoon until five when Aunt Cammie left to supervise some household matters, joining us at table at six for supper. J. H. was late, not arriving until six thirty, just as Aunt Cammie and I were finishing our dessert. About the time J. H. started eating, McKinley, who had already removed most of the plates, came into the summer dining room and left the keys to the various iceboxes and cupboards with Aunt Cammie, saying that he was going because after he got home he had to get dinner all over again. J. Y. asked him if he didn't have just one person,--his brother -- to prepared food, and McKinley said that was all, but it took just as much time to prepare food for one as for ten. J. H. suggested that on these warm evenings, he might serve his brother a cold supper. McKinley continued on his course, leaving by the front gallery which is not an old custom for the house servants. I reckon he was too excited inwardly to know how he got out of the place, for he must have been in a frightful hurry in thus being unable to wait five minutes for J. H. to finish. Something tells me Melrose will be having a new cook before long.

Aunt Cammie dictated to me until eight when Marvin came to take up the good work. He had a frightful cold, however, and so I let him read only one page, and then sent him on his way. I broke an old custom, after showing him to the lane, by calling on Aunt Cammie and sitting with her until after nine, when we said goodnight. I found Grandpa waiting for me at Lyle's gate, and together we went to bed.

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June 4th - Tuesday.

Another smooth, pastel dawn. History, in recording the extraordinary, noted the fact that once Mary Anoinettesatisfied a whim to see the dawn, and accordingly made a special trip from Versailles to Marly to observe the birth of a new day from the upper gardens of that famous royal domaine. For a variety of reasons, it is a pity she didn't make a more extended journey to witness this phenomenon, for had she come to Melrose, she might have observed a series of them without the trouble of getting out of bed.

Frank arrived at five. I had gone back to sleep before and just before I awoke as the screen door opened, I was dreaming that he and I were gathering great luscious bunches of grapes in some vast vineyard, the situation of which wasn't clear in my mind. As he poured my coffee, I recounted this dream to him, and he said that he dreamed sometimes, too. The other day he had great difficulty in rounding up a big black bull which had been pastured back toward little river, and it took the second try of several of the hands to get the animal moved from one lot to another. He was tired that night and had gone to sleep easily, but shortly after falling asleep, his wife awakened him, saying: "What is all this talk about 'You big balckbeast'?"

Frank chuckled as he recounted this episode, and I gathered that possibly his wife might have accused him of talking about her in his sleep.

Aunt Cammie came to see me a little after eight. He hadn't gone to bed until after mid-night, but in spite of her physical fatigue, she radiated a freshness and energy that never fails to fill me with admiration and wonder.

Dinner at twelve with one extra guest, and futile attempts on my part to get any conversation going with anyone except Aunt Cammie. With demi-tasse, we went over the mail, which included a copy of Life with marvelous colored pictures of Iris and airplane views of Versailles. Knowing that I shall never see that beloved spot again, it now somehow seems so remote that it is almost as though it were in another world. Possibly I shall visit in another life, for in my "athe's house there are many mansions".

A little after one, Aunt Cammie left for a trip down to Washington, a., a hundred miles or so south of here.

I remained at home, and just as I was getting a newsbroadcast from London, Celeste came over to present her sister in law and the latter's little son of some six or seven years. I was amused when Celeste told me she knew I had been in town this morning because one of her friends had seen me there and had reported to Celeste when she visited her a little before noon. I reckon Aunt Cammie will be surprised, too, because we shall both have been under the impression that we spent themorning working together at Melrose.

After coffee, I decided to call on Eline. I met Frank on Cain River bridge, almost as though it had been pre-arranged.



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and returned to "elrose while I continued along the river to Zeline's. We chatted for an hour and she spoke much of the soldiers who had camped in front of her place a week or so back, and of "les Yankées" during the Confederate War, and how much she hoped the Europeans wouldn't come over to Cain River. As usual she carried a distaff, making large sweeping gestures as she recounted tales of Madame Benjamin Mettoyer's experiences when les Yankées disported in the mettoyer goose pond and appropriated all the movable possessions of the colored people they were fighting to make equal to themselves. "ow "eline chuckled on that point. During the entire conversation, she used but two expressions in English. --once in speaking of the period just after 1865 when she said "les choses settles down", and then as an ~~exclamation~~ exclamation, she occasionally through in the word: "Oh, Lord".

On the way back home, I stopped for a moment at the saloon to have a beer, and talked for a few seconds with Bill and Marvin. The latter's cold seemed to be as bad as ever. The priest, "ather Pixley, came in his car while I was there. I always drink in the section marked "Colored" over the door. There is a conviviality of atmosphere in that section which is entirely lacking in the section marked "White". But "ather Pixley, to whom the name "ather Pipsqueak would apply very nicely, never enters either of these partitions, but rather enters the third door opening on the front gallery which is the section where meats and groceries are sold. It is here he has them serve him his beer. What a stupid fellow he is.

But in our side,--the "Colored, we had quite a lot of fun, talking war and Cain River news. We even spoke of Elmer's husband who had killed the man at the bar where I was standing. The murder had taken place last June 16th,--"Emancipation Day. Yesterday, it seems, "elix "aurenz had taken "lmer and her three little children to town to see their husband and father in the jail. It seems "r. "alck didn't know until "lmer arrived that she knew her husband had been taken, and the first thing this officer asked her was "How in hell did you know that bastard was in here?" "he told "r. "alck that Mr "H. had told her. Elmer and the children were permitted to talk with the man only through a small wicket. I should have liked to hear the conversation, for it must have been quite different from the usual interviews of this nature as portrayed by "ollywood.. But "elix was there and he told someone that Elmer's husband had asked her if she had "taken up" with any man after he left her last "une, and that in response she blandly said that she had,--and giggled,--and that her husband said that he was glad she had. As the children are small,--the oldest being around five, I suppose, I reckon the whole experience and conversation made little impression on them. I certainly hope not.

"ix o'clock, and back home for supper, with only J. H. and Eugene and me at the board. Afterwards I rounded up some lovely bouquets of dahlias, Heintze and "randpa trailing me all over the garden. I waited until 20 minutes of nine in "unt "ammie's room for her return, and as soon as we had exchanged greetings, I flew out, for I realized she must have been exhausted and warm, and I felt probably complete relaxation would be more appreciated than

conversations.

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June 5th - 1940 - Wednesday.

Four thirty and another dawn in exact duplication of the others that have preceeded it this week. They're marvelous.

Prak was a little earlier than usual this morning, and I was glad because it gave us an extra few minutes to get the day started right. By six I had bathed and given Granpa his breakfast and was ready for mine, which I had finished by six thirty, and so on to my machine which I operated with difficulty because of a faulty ribbon until a little after eight when Aunt Cammie arrived, as fresh as a daisy.

We worked mightily on manuscripts until eleven, when J. H. called for us to take us to the clover fields out toward little river where we watched the machine and the several darkies who were operating it. It is a wonderful contraption which cuts the clover, threshes it and bags the seed, --throwing the hay to one side, all as the machine travels through the fields. It is a striking example of another of those creations of industry which is eradicating the necessity of lots of hands from the farm, and of course brings up that eteranal question which modern savants haven't solved yet,--wht to do with the people whose jobs are obsorbed by the new inventions.

Back home, and a couple of ladies,--a Mrs. Williams of Alabama and some woman from town whose name I don't remember, who wanted to see the place which I undertook to do, giving Aunt Cammie time to set her hand to her mail which she had neglected to dictate to me all morning.

Eleven thirty and I dashed off a couple of silly letters after saying goodbye to the ladies, and so on to dinner at twelve.

Old Dr. Scruggs grandson,--a friend of Dan, I gather, was at the board as was "on Parris, a youth from west Louisiana who has been here before. I found dinner dull.

When all the guests had fown, Aunt Cammie and I ran over the mail which included a nice letter from Macgruder Drake of Church Hill, giving me many titles of books covering that region, most of which we already had except the one by the Reverend Stone on The Growth of "rotentism in the South West and the Memoires of "ontgomery, both of which we shall search for.

I then went back to my machine with the admonition from Aunt Cammie that Beth "illiams would be here at three o'clock to take us to Mrs. Ailhaut "rudhommes. But at three o'clock Frank arrived, bearing a huge bouquet of the finest gladiolas I have ever seen,--tremendous in size,--about four feet long I should guess, and with the most exquisite pastel shades from pale yellows through deep crimson that I have ever seen. He said that beth had brought them but that she siad Mrs. "rudhomme wouldn't be able to receive us until Friday at three as she had suddenly remembered she was giving a party that afternoon. Beth had told her that we would accordingly come then and that Mrs. Henry would be honoring Mrs. "rudhomme by calling on her.



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I took coffee with Beth at Aunt Cammie and met some young lady, Marjorie somebody who is spending a few days here working in the library before returning to Baton Rouge where she received her Ph. D. this year. She is writing her thesis on "The Widows of Louisiana, which is certainly a title with infinite possibilities but which will not be quite the way, Lyle, for instance, would do it.

Beth told me she had done her thesis when studying in Paris on Notre Dame and spoke of the fine reproduction of the cathedral in last week's issue of Life. I had noticed it,--thanks to a good friend who had thought of me.

At four I returned to my desk and remained there until five when Aunt Cammie came to listen to the news with me, and Mr. Harris came, too. He went through my book case to see if I would have anything that he would be interested in. I think it didn't. At five thirty we all said good bye, and I leaped into my shower before supper which we finished off at six thirty or seven.

There had been a little drizzle just before supper, but not enough rain to do any good, and so Aunt Cammie and I staggered around in the front gardens with a hose for half an hour. Frank came by to the house for his supper which, I hope, McKinley had left for him in the warming oven. We chatted gaily about the old red rooster and how we were going to lasso him one of these evenings. When Aunt Cammie had moved out of ear shot, Frank spoke of the great distress he felt in realizing that someone must have told Dan about Frank's confidential report covering McKinley's continued bitter complaining about one thing and another. I assured him that I felt Dan hadn't received any news direct but rather had pasted a couple of re-actions he had heard in such a way that in bringing them to Frank's attention, they seemed to have more grounds than they actually had. Frank's eyes were blazing and he indulged in language, in speaking of McKinley, that was much more forceful than pretty. Frankly I felt sorry for him on two scores, but primarily for the outrage that he seemed to feel -- quite naturally -- for having always done exactly what he felt was loyalty. I soothed him as best I could, but his heart was broken, but thank heavens he didn't cry but stifled his tears by indulging in all the strong language he could think of.

It was approaching eight when I joined Aunt Cammie in her room. We talked of Eliza, while Aunt Cammie divided the various sheets into months and years, 1845, 1847 and 1850. I certainly hope we can find more.

A little after eight I said good night, and went to Lyle's alone, as Grandpa seemed to be out of the picture. For a while I sat thinking of lots of things, as I smoked my cigarette and drank a coca-cola, before going to bed.

June 6th - Thursday.

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Dawn, and a different this morning, with a sky overcast, although there has been no rain since the scanty shower of last evening just before supper.

Five o'clock, and I was delighted to see Frank, and to notice that he had regained his equilibrium. Apparently the night had smoothed out many a wrinkle and events that transpired at the close of a hard day seemed less monumental twelve hours afterward.

Six o'clock and breakfast. I began raining, too. I had decided last night that I would take a walk this morning. The rain might have been a deterrent but as soon as the shower slowed down to a mist I started out, although before I was far along the Montrose road I was pretty wet and little streams of water were trickling down my face. But I kept on and eventually got to town. But I missed the train back and so I walked out to the edge of town and there was picked up by a man who knew me,--Harold's father, although I am sure I had never seen him before. The family name is Meziere and these mulattoes have descended from one of the earliest Frenchmen to come to Natchitoches, for one runs across the name frequently in the 18th century records.

We talked about many things, and among other things he asked me why I thought the negroes,--that is the word he used,--celebrated June 19th as Emancipation Day, since, as he recalled his History, Lincoln issued the Proclamation in the Spring and the time limit for complying to it by the Southern States expired in or at the end of the year. I was interested to note how he in no way associated himself with negroes.

I was back home by eleven, got out a little mail and spoke with Aunt Cammie for a few minutes about the Meziere, of whom there are three brothers, sons of the man who drove me home. They are Harold, Earle and Howard, the two former always having worked in the garage at Melrose during recent years and Howard having recently joined them in their work after having spent a couple of years in New Orleans.

Dinner at twelve, with the table changed somewhat, as Dan and J. H. have gone to Baton Rouge and New Orleans. In their stead were Celeste and her sister in law, the widow Rigard and her little off spring, and Marjorie somebody from Baton Rouge,--L.S.U., and Alberta Kinsey who had arrive during the morning and is to stay for a week or so painting. When Alberta arrived, she was wearing a warm traveling dress, and remarked how warm she found it. Aunt Cammie accordingly suggested that she put on a lighter summer dress before dinner. Alberta thought it was a good idea, and so flew over to Dr. Miller's cabin which she is occupying and slipped into a light flimsy dress. It was a little arresting, however, to note that Alberta didn't seem very much cooler in spite of the lighter dress, for in putting it on she had forgotten to take off the heavier one she already was wearing, so that the lighter one merely gave the appearance of being cooler to those who saw her in it, but surely only made her more hot and bothered.



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Dinner was rather unsatisfactory for me, since I contrived to make it so, being almost too curt to Celeste who started the dinner by getting into my hair. I was frankly ashamed of myself when it was over and half apologized to Aunt Cammie, but I don't think much of apologies and much less of people who jockey themselves into a position that requires them to offer one.

After dinner Aunt Cammie and I wrote several letters together, and then I worked on my typewriter alone. At three Frank served iced coca-cola and at three thirty hot coffee.

Five o'clock and another bath,--the fourth I had had so far during the day, and then supper at six. Conversation was rather good, with Alberta, Marjorie and I lingering long while Aunt Cammie was off supervising tasks for the gardeners on the following day. She returned a little before seven thirty with a magnificent bouquet of every type of old fashioned flower imaginable so that Alberta might have a fresh bouquet to pain tomorrow morning.

I went out to the store for some blades and found everyone around the place,--the mulattoes, with a slight case of jitters. The overseer, Ernest Durban, or Derbanne, was drunk again, as I understand he always is when J. H. is away. He was saying all sorts of silly things and depending on the mulattoes to execute his orders and sometimes keep him up right while at the same time he was cursing them with such phrases as "You God damned 'yaller' bastards", etc.

Back to Aunt Cammie's, we chatted for a while in front of the electric fan, with Alberta gracing the big wing chair and looking twice as small in it as she really is. At a little after eight she said she was going to retire, and we said goodnight. I left five or ten minutes later, laughing with Aunt Cammie about some foolishness of which we always seem to have plenty.

Grandpa was waiting for me on my front gallery, and together we went over to Lyle's. But it was hot, and I decided Ice Cream was what I needed, and so I went over Cane River to the saloon, talked for a little with Bill and Marvin, Clarence Compton and some of the boys. Someone I took to be Harold came in, and we talked quite a bit before I got my ice cream and started home. Harold said he would walk with me, and we talked along at a great rate until we reached the garage which was closed. It was only then that I realized that it wasn't Harold I was talking with but rather his brother, Howard. We laughed at my mistake, and said goodnight. Grandpa was waiting for me on Lyle's gallery and together we had our ice cream, Grandpa having a little dish made from the top of the carton while I had the lion's share and loved it. And so to bed.

June 6th - Friday.

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It's curious how little impression the date of the month makes on me in this delicious little "island of happiness. Someday I must really get a calendar to keep this Journal straight. If it ever should survive the hazards of time, and anyone should ever care to read it, I reckon there will be a great deal of tearing of hair to correct the dates, for it would appear that only the week days can be counted on to be correct.

Four thirty and another perfect dawn, with coffee and Frank at five, and both in perfect form to get the day going in harmony with the gorgeous perfection out of doors.

I was done with things before seven, after which I worked with Henry in arranging and putting in order some of the treasure which we had collected from afar. For a little while, Frank joined us on the back gallery at Lyle's house where we were working. I suggested moving some of the treasure to view it at better advantage but Henry thought it unwise. Frank seemed to agree with me, however, and he accordingly started to re-arrange a portion of it when an accident occurred which jeopardized some of the units as Frank was re-arranging them. It was pitiful, yet sweet, to see how sensitively Frank reacted to this which he felt to be his fault. Instantaneously he began to shake all over and to chide himself for his clumsiness. I laughed at the whole business, trying to give the impression that it wasn't of the slightest importance, but Frank didn't give up his self-criticism and shortly afterward said: "Lord, let me get on with those mules. I ain't got no business handlin' such things".

Ten o'clock and Aunt Cammie joined me for coffee, with Alberta already awaiting us in my maisonette. She had brought a partially completed canvass of magnolias which Frank had gathered for her and arranged them in a magnificent old eight sided white porcelaine tureen. We talked much of many things, and ended up by remarking how unfortunate a person is who in spite of a splendid intellect, is robbed of everything in life by having the various departments of his intellect so perfectly balanced that there is never any chance for enthusiasm to enject life into any of the varied intellectual pursuits.

When we were done I rattled off a couple of short letters, and so to the store just as the postman arrived.

Dinner followed and some nice clippings in the mail which followed including a notice regarding the Tres Riches Heures du Duc de Berri which is being brought to the United States. I smiled as I thought of the friend who had seen this article in the papers and sent it to me, for we had discussed the advisability of sending this volume to the United States a couple of years back. For a dumb person like myself, I suppose the pleasure of seeing something accomplished after years of thinking about its advisability, must be somewhat similar to the sensation of an astronomer who through careful calculation concluded that a planet must of necessity be at a certain point in the Heavens, even though no telescope is strong enough to allow confirmation to the eye, and the astronomer is accordingly gratified when years later a stronger lens is created and someone trains his telescope at the point already determined by the plottings of the astronomer, when, lo, the long hidden astral body comes into



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From one until two thirty I worked at my machine, and with such vigro that I thought a shave and bath were in order before Beth came to take us to call at the "rudhommes. I accordingly disrobed, had a good shave, and stepping into my bath, worked up a luxuriant lather. At just this point the water ceased. I accrodgkngly waited for a few minutes until the soap had dried a little, then stepped out to my curtained front door and screamed at Sam Brown who was working in the garden not far away. I told him I would be glad if he would start the pump, as I needed some ~~xxxx~~ water for my shower.

"Yas, sir?" as usual, and Sam scurried off, and I dripped back to my shower, where I stood under the opened faucet in vast expectancy. Quite a time went by, and I began to wonder if Sam had forgotten how to turn on the electric contraption that pumps water into the tower. By this time the soap had pretty well solidified and was beginning to act as an astringent that reminded me much of mud baths I had taken years ago under much more amusing circumstances.

But patience is my long suit, and in a little while I was rewarded, for I soon learned Sam hadn't really died, as I had being to wonder. For sure enough, ~~xxxx~~ even though no water appeared, Sam himself suddenly stuck his head in the bathroom door, and in his hands bearing a little silver tray with a cute little silver pitcher filled with ice water.

"What with the we ather as hot as it is, Sam, that water will be alright as far as it goes, but if you don't mind, I should be glad if you would start the pump so I may eventually finish my bath",--and with a hasty "Yea,----Lord" Sam bolted out, and three or four minutes later I was having a glorious time under a torrent that poured from my faucet.

Three o'clock and Beth arrived to take Aunt Cammie, Marjorie Anspach and me up to Dr. and Mrs. Hebert Prudhommes who live at La Cote Joyeuse,--now called Bermuda, some four or five miles up cane rive from Melrose.

On the way up, Beth spoke to us about the original Prudhomme grant, given by Louis XIV to Jean Baptiste Prudhomme, Medecin Du Roy, for his services as Dr. of the King's forces in America. This grant was of some ten thousand acres from near Nacictoches along Cane River all the way to Cloutierville, a distance of some twenty or thirty miles. Surely this must have been one of the finest grants ever made in America, since other grant may have been larger, none ever embraced such marvelously fertile river-bottom lands. The original grantee, Beth said, built a fort on the site where her house,--the old Narcisse Prudhomme house--now stands. This accounts for the exceptionally large cisterns at some distance from the present house. The descendants of this original Prudhomme ~~andx~~ retained, for the most part, the lands covered by the original grant. Roughly from 1800 to 1860 they prospered, as is indicated in the picture given the community by Lyle's account of it in Old Louisiana. The various descendants build charming houses,--never huge in dimension but withal quite adequate for adequate entertaining and the convenience of the household.

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The house which we were to visit was built by Jean Prudhomme. It is about a half mile from the main road, and approached by a fine long avenue of trees. It is built on a spot forming the middle inside point of a "U" formed by Cane River which makes a magnificent sweep around three sides of the gardens that once receded from this charming plantation home toward the edge of the river.

Jean Prudhomme had been born in the big brick house on this plantation, the big house sanding further back by quarter of a mile, from the central point of the "U" that the present house occupies. Jean never married but when he had received his education in Paris, he returned home and acquired a portion of the original family lands, and built himself this charming home, planting great avenues of trees separating his holdings from other property, and developing the gardens around his new mansion. I believe this was early in the 1850's.

Jean must have been a bachelor of excellent taste as many little details that have come down from him indicate. It is said that he entertained a very select coterie of friends here, and these included intimate friends of the Cane River region, New Orleans and Paris.

When the Confederate War broke, Jean continued to live in his home and to entertain. When the Yankee's came by in 1864, ~~xxxx~~ burning some three hundred plantation homes along Cane River, they pillaged and fired the big brick home where Jean was born. It seems curious, at first thought, that they didn't also burn Jean's house which was in such close proximity, but it is said that at the time the Yankee's arrived, Jean was entertaining a boy frined from Paris, and that these two, chancing to have a French flag in the house, hung it over the front gallery, and the soldiers seeing it, passed the house by.

A year or so later, with the war over, Jean dug up the fine silver and other treasures he had buried in the ne rby fields, and unlike so many another Southerner, he found himself still rich in spite of the devastation that surround him, and his life of gentility went on as ever before. Aunt Cammie remarked that she remembers people talking about Jean and how he had never allowed anyone to hunt in his park which was well stocked with deer and other game. She also remembered that as soon as Jean died, all night long the park and woods about his home reverberated with the explosion of shells as peachers slaughtered with vengeance all the fine game which Jean had so long protected.

It seems that with Jean's death, this delicious little corner of Eden passed to the Ailhaut Prudhommes and after their death was scheduled to be ~~xx~~ divided among several heirs, which included Dr. Hebert Prudhomme. As a youth he had been brought up in luxury, had gone to Baltimore to study, had become a dentist but, having too delicate feeling to stand gentle ladies writh under his drilling and extractions, he relinquished his profession, married a Maryland woman, sunk a lot of money in a chicken farm and was somewhat at loose ends when the Prudhomme heirs decided that instead of divinging



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dividing the old plantation up into small parts or selling it out of the family, they would keep it intact, drawing lots to determine which one would inherit it. Dr. Hebert Prudhomme was the lucky one.

Having certain ideas as to the relative value of the past and the present, an inclination,--in any--toward modern furniture as opposed to ante-bellum heirlooms, life in a metropolis as opposed to Cane River plantation habitation, he inclined toward all the former, but through force of circumstances, eventually came to Jean's home, making as frequent forays into the Baltimore region as finances and intermittent advent of off-spring would permit. Estelle, his wife concurred in these inclinations, the more so, perhaps because she hated his husband and was enchanted to absent herself, not only from his bed for months or years at a time but also from anything that suggested Prudhomme property.

ix It was with these facts in mind that we arrived at the lovely old plantation home Jean had built and loved so well long ago. As we mounted the brick steps to the gallery running across the entire front of the old place, our hostess did not appear but a colored maid did. She transmitted an order that we should come right in. We did,--stepping into a lively oblong drawingroom, housing some lovely old pieces of furniture,--secretary, tables, etc., with an astonishing number of portraits in all sizes decorating or mutilating the walls. For these were of all sizes and periods, running all the way from the oils of the early 1800's through the horrible enlarged photographs of the bad attempts at photographic artistry of the early 1900's.

Miss Estelle,--or as she was pleased to style herself, Madame Hebert,--greeted us. She nervously pointed out all the portraits,--all of which were hung so near the ceiling that I couldn't make out anything about them save for the hundred year spread in their creation. It was noticeable that she set as high store on the gay 90 chromos as she did on the 1800 oils. It sounded funny, too, as she rattled off the names of "her" ancestors, for being all Prudhommies of which clan she is a member only by marriage, she gave their French names a twist that made one listen attentively to unscramble the strange sounds and piece them together again to guess to whom she may have referred.

On the left there were two bedrooms giving off the drawing room. There were some lovely pieces of furniture in them and a couple of delicious French clocks of the 18th century. The rooms themselves, however, were inordinately untidy and unkempt, although I must say that the three big fourposter beds were nicely made up.

Beth had told Estelle that Mrs. Henry was doing the Prudhommies a signal honor by deigning to drop by to see one of them, and Estelle chattered incessantly about ridiculous details to puff up her own standing while we merely wanted a moment of quiet to look at some of the fine pieces.

From the rooms on the left, we passed to the rooms on the right housing some more lovely old pieces, lovely old vases with hands

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hands supporting the delicate little flower holders. There were some bound copies of *Gazette de la Tribune*, published in 1837 in this room too. The two large armoires were of different periods, and the tables were possibly good as Victorian pieces,--I wouldn't know about that.

While we were looking over these treasures, one of Estelle's sons,--a youth of some twenty or thirty came in. He was introduced, and greeted us pleasantly. He said: "Mam, I need a couple of shirts, --I'm going to shreevport". Mama said alright,--have Suzie iron a couple for you.....and that was that.

Back in the large central drawing room, we stepped through the double doors into the dining room just beyond. In the center the table was tastefully decorated with a pale yellow cloth, red candle in charming little hurricane shades, red plates,--four of them, for Estelle had expected only Aunt Cammie, Beth and me. There were plenty of plates and silver dishes on the table, too,--crackers, cheese, cookies, cakes, bonbons, etc.

Estelle wanted to show us the silver. She keeps it in the great Victorian sideboard in this room, and it contains an astonishing array of beautifully designed pieces,--dozens of knives and forks, spoons of the teaspoon variety, vegetable, soup, rice, and heaven knows what all. Some of the great ladles must have weighed six or eight pounds. We estimated that a dozen solid teaspoons could easily have been made from any of this large number. And one thing about this lovely collection was that each individual piece bore the name of some member of the Prudhomme family, while the trays, elegant silver pitchers, tea service, coffee service, etc., bore the family coat of arms. There were many interesting pieces aside from the dozens and dozens in this particular group. For instance there were smart fruit knives and steak knives with ivory or bone handles, exquisite odd spoons, such as one that took my eye particularly,--one designed to pour water through over tea leaves. Shapes somewhat like a shell, this lovely silver piece was perforated in the bowl part in such a manner that as one held it to the light a gorgeous peacock tale of light filtered through. There were ewers, too, and a good sized silver bell for the table, candlesticks, spoon holders, etc., etc. ad infinitum.

When we had done looking at this astonishing treasure, it was well after five and time for us to be starting back for Melrose. But of course this wasn't to be thought of, as the tell-tale table indicated. And so Arjorie and I looked through the books in the great mahogany book case in the dining room, noting a copy of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*,--I imagine an original edition,--as the name of the author was omitted, as I understand the case to have been when the book first was brought out. There was a fine set,--possibly original of *Chateaubriand*, *Thiers' Consulat et Empire*, *Louis Blanc* or *Leblanc's Histoire de Dix Ans*, etc., etc in the French school, and several items from the Latin, in French translation, such as *Quintus*, *Cicero*, etc.



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But our inspection of the library was cut short by Estelle asking us to the tea table, after she had turned out all the lights-- electric ones, and lighted plenty of red candles on the table and on the several side tables.

Now that we were five, and the table had been set for only four, there was a horrible moment of hesitation just as we were about to be seated, as Estelle gave a terrific example of the conquest of mind over nerves, for she momentarily hesitated whether she would refrain from sitting down with her guests as the charming Southern hostess, - at the risk of admitting she didn't have a fifth red glass dish to add for her cover,--~~xxxx~~ or whether she would sacrifice her studied table effect by having an ordinary white brought in for herself and so occupy her place at the head of the table.

For a moment she labored heavily while we hesitated before sitting down, and then with a Herculean effort, she yelled at the colored girl in the kitchen to bring in a plate, and so won her first round in her attempt to give the impression of being the affable southern hostess.

Chesse and crackers made the rounds, and then Estelle called to the girl in the kitchen to bring in the lemonade. The girl brought it and poured. As we chatted and ate in the nice humid atmosphere, made warmer by the blazing candles, we drank our lemonade faster than we might have. Estelle screamed at the girl to make another round. She did.

It was now time for the ice cream to be brought in, and from the little tray of delicate old glass, I gathered that wine might be in the offing, too.

Estelle turned her head toward the kitchen door and was about to scream another order, when a marvelous idea must have suddenly course through her head. After all, there was that generous sized silver bell buried with the tons of silver in the lower recesses of the Victorian sideboard. She slid from her chair and fumbled around in the shadowy depths and eventually brought it forth, nonchalantly sliding it on the table in that "Never touched me" manner that children sometimes assume when they have committed some breach of ~~xxxxxx~~ etiquette which grown-up out of kindness seemingly haven't noticed, and so permitting the child to change his expression from embarrassment to uncertain assurance.

Conversation was being pumped along by the other four of us, and in a minute or two, came Estelle's next big proof to us that she knew how a servant should be summoned properly. She was a fool to reckon without the servant.

Accordingly our hostess picked up the bell and rang it gingerly, seeming to wonder if she was ringing it too loudly. Our conversation resumed,--but nothing happened in the direction of the kitchen door. Estelle, just a little uncertain because of the lack of appreciable results from the kitchen, ~~x~~ grabbed the belle a second time and rang it even more vigorously. Not a move came from the kitchen. I was almost giggling in my glass.--

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as my hostess' face and demeanor seemed to be growing a little frantic. In her own mind I felt sure she must be telling herself: "Damn that nigger. Everything I have been ~~x~~ doing today is so outlandish, I'll bet she probably thinks I have dragged a cow into the dining room, and that's the noise she she hears,--the cowbell, and in the end, I'll have to admit before the whole table that my servants never heard a bell ring in the dining room".

To distract things a little, I asked Aunt Cammie some point about Cane River, and in the moment of conversation, Estelle got back her equilibrium, and turning toward the kitchen, screamed at the girl to serve the next "course". The girl countered by asking in a silly voice: "Which thing shall I serve first?"

Fortunately at this point, Dr. Hebert Frudhomme appeared. He assured his wife, in response to her rather dubious inquiry that he would join us at the table. She accordingly got an order to bring in another white place, and while she was up to this, Estelle got hold of her had told her to fetch in the ice cream.

Dr. Hebert sat next to Aunt Cammie who is grand at keeping the conversation going. Dr. Hebert said he had just come in from riding over the plantation. Aunt Cammie remarked upon the magnificent cameo stick-pin he was wearing in his tie and admonished him that it was so dangerous to wear such a lovely old piece while in the field. Dr. Hebert told her that he never did,--he had just slipped in on as he came in the house. There was something rather hollow about the conversation, for somehow one felt he had spoiled the effect he had originally produced of having leaped from the horse's back into our tea party.

But by now the ice cream was around, and the wine was being poured. Estelle could have killed the girl ~~xx~~ who served, for in presenting the tray to me, she placed the nastiest little wine glass nearest my hand, so that the four original glasses that Estelle had trotted out for the party went on down the table and of course Dr. Hebert, her husband, --of all people got one of them.

As conversation was going along nicely at the other end of the board, Estelle and I got things going along nicely up at our end. Out of a clear sky, as I complimented her upon the bouquet of the wine, she pointed out to me: "You know I am from a prominent family in Maryland?" I am not of Cane River, you know".

"Ah!", I countered diplomatically.

"Oh, yes, indeed," she responded. "My family was always very prominent,--the Coveys,--and very public spirited, too,--in fact practically all of them always owned race horses'."

Her air of triumph was arresting. I could only do some uncertain applause.

By this time I had really heard about all I wanted to, but in compliment to the hostess I asked for another of her cookies,



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which wer home made, and really very good.

Unfortunately a clock struck a single chime from somewhere, and I asked if it could really be four thirty, as he must be home before five.

Someone consulted a watch. It, of course was five thirty, and so we were forced to tear ourselves away from these people who had been dispensing amenities under the roof that batchelor Jean Prudhomme had built and under which he had entertained so exquisitely in ante-bellum days. Poor Jean,--I wonder how long he has been, and how much long he must continue to revolve in his grave.

On the way back to Melrose, I was glad to hear Beth say that Vernon, her husband, makes advances to Dr. Hebert Prudhomme on his plantation and that the Dr. is indifferent as to business details and never even pays the slightest attention as to whether he gets bills for anything or not.

Of course there are a half dozen children of Dr. Hebert and Estelle,--three of whom, I believe have been amrried tis Spring. and it would seem that under ordniary circumstances they might eventually get all the plantation and the lovely silver and other fine old pieces,--and being as harum-scarum as their parents, as I understand the are, would probably get rid of all of it as fast as they could pitch it into the gutter. But there is great solace in knowing that Vernon is making advances to the family and that they are so dumb that they don't even car if they have any statements or even any bills, for this will one day give Vernon a chance to hurry up the date of foreclosure, and possibly Beth will get some of these old pieces, and thus they may stay in t is locality,--where they should,--and find a haven in the hands of someone who will appreciate them.

We were home a little after six, went through the motinons of eating supper, but for the most part talked with J. H. who had just returned from New Orleans.

Aunt Cammie worked in the garden until after seven, and on the way in we met Frank going out with the old red rooster which he had lasooced again to taken him home with him a second time, so there'll be no pear-tree serenade tomorrow morning at four.

Aunt Cammie, Alberta and I talked for a little, and then a little after eight I wither drew, so as to be out of the place before the Mazurettes arrived, for da's school is out in New Orleans and so she arrives tonight, spending the night at Melrose with her husband, and so on to little river in the morning.

It was so warm I went down to the saloon to get some ice cream. There was quite a crown of mulatoes playing black-Jack. Among the hangers-on, I saw Mitchell and talked with him a bit as he wited for Felix Mettoyer to give him a hair cut, for Felix does some business at Bills on Fr days. I w saw Windsor, too, he was going with the others to a wake about midnight,--three people having died in the neighborhood today. And so home to bed.

June 7th - Saturday.

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Too many bonbons at the Prudhommes yesterday, I guess, for I awoke with a rather ancient feeling and a slight headache.

I am certainly glad I didn't have to go to any of the three wakes which my mulato friends attended last night.

Five o'clock, and Frank and my morning coffee made the world brighter. We talked about the ~~xxx~~ principle figures at last night's several wakes. Everyone with whom I spoke last night had said the same thing that Frank said: "William Sarpi was a good man. His neighbor who had also died ~~xx~~ Friday, too, was also a pretty good scout. He had a certain distinction of having spent six months in a penetenary some years back. I seems that he and another fellow made home brew, and all went along swimmingly until the partners fell out and the second fellow reported his friend to the law. The jail sentence followed immediately. But the Divine Law of recompense was working fast, for within a month the ex-partner and vengence seeker was discovered to be selling hootch, too, and so he made a little journey in the same direction that his former partner had just made.

I spent the entire morning at my machine save for half an hour when Aunt Cammie came over for coffee with me. We rounded up a lot of Cane River history over our cups, and even speculated much a out the future of the Mazurettes on ~~2~~ Little River. We giggled, too, over Charles' joy when he learned from the Madam last evening that he and his wife might occupy separate rooms when the latter arrived on the eight o'clock train from New Orleans. Strange doings.....eahc of the Mazurettes always expressing their unbounded affection and infatuation for each other in public, and Charles always talking about her with toal qualities of yearning before ~~xx~~ people who hav n't even ever seen her, -- and yet when she arrives after an absence of nine months in New Orleans, Charles seems in a panic for fear the two of them may have to occupy the same room. What is this thing called love?

Tw lve o'clock and dinner with not an itoa of mail afterwards. And so I piloted Alberta and Marjorie over to my house to give Alberta a peek at some pictures of Natchez,--a place she has never visited, but I left them in my house to browse at will while I returned to the big house to sit in the library for a while with Aunt Cammie while she read me English translations of letters which Jean Prudhomme's father had written to his children in the middle 1820's from Cane River,--all of them dated La Cote Joyeuse, to his children who were studying in Nantes, Paris, etc. The letters were charming, as where those of other people, written to Jean while a youth, indicating a certain slant on values that harmoniz3d very nicely with the ideas I had already formed of this cultivated batchlor.

Three o'clock and Frank served buttermilk and coffee to me at Lyle's where I was working. He told me he had to hurry along as he had to slaughter a ~~xxx~~ sheep for the store right away, and he spoke of how he skinned it. I had never heard of the method he described, and so he said he would be enchanted to call for me when he was ready for the sacrifice if I wished to see the business.

A few minutes later he called for me, and together we went



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to the picket enclose lot where the fire wood is kept, and there under a pecane tree, Frank brought a big sheep, tied a rope around one hind leg, and throughin the rope over a branch of the tree, drew the poor animal up. He then fastened the other leg to the same rope, while the poor thing bleeted and kicked with its front legs. Deftly Frank picked up a large knife, and in a twinkling slit the animals throat. One could hear the blood spurt and the animal cough as the blood coursed through its mouth. In a minute, thank Heavens, it was dead. Frank told me he never looked at the sheep in the face while he was suspending him from the limb or just before slitting its throat, for he said it always seemed to him that the sheep was crying tears and he couldn't stand to look at that.

The next operation was something I had never seen before. With the carcass still suspended, Frank cut a bit of the skin from the flank of the sheep at a point near the place where the leg joins the body. Putting his lips to this opening in the skin, Frank blew hard, caught the opening with his fingers, spat once, took a deep breath and then applied his lips again, blowing with all his might. Quickly the whole sheep seemed to expand, and in another moment it was almost a young balloon in appearance. Immediately Frank caught the opening with a sting, I think, and then began removing the fore legs and then the skin itself. It seems that by inflating the sheep in this manner, the hide comes off very readily, and as near as I could make out, what with the expert knowledge that he and Sam Peace applied themselves to the job, the whole thing was accomplished in a jiffy. I must ask Frank just where it is that the air goes to thus inflate the carcass so amazingly.

Back to my maisonnette, I took off my beard and dashed through a shower, but before I was dressed, Mat appeared, and said Aunt Cammie had something she wanted me to see. I gathered that Robina had arrived. She had.

I accordingly speeded up my toilette a bit and joined the ladies up stairs. It was good to be together again,--this pleasant triangle which Aunt Cammie and Robina form so harmonisoully whenever we three find ourselves together.

Alberta joined us as Aunt Cammie left to supervise some gardening activities, and later Robina and I strolled about the gardens, and sat for an hour at Lyle's getting caught up on matters of mutual interest.

Supper about six, and afterward Robina, Alberta and Marjorie went for a little ride while I remained with Aunt Cammie in the gardens at the West of the house where she and Frank and I laughed and carried on as Frank re-arranged hose lines, etc.

Dr. and Mrs. McCook and their young offspring, Daniel, suddenly appeared from nowhere. We toured and toured the gardens with them eventually coming to a full halt in Lyle's white garden, where Robina and Alberta eventually joined us. They remained until nearly eight, - the McCooks.

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With the McCooks gone, Aunt Cammie piloted Robina and me about the gardens, now deepening into early darkness, as she cut off the several hoses, and on entering the houses, suggested that we all have ice cream. In a way this might save me a trip to the saloon later, and so Robina and I jumped in the car and drove down to the sallon and back with four pints of ice cream for Aunt Cammie, Marjorie, Alberta, Robina and me. Alberta does eat ice cream, and Marjorie eats slowly, so that by 8:30 I had eaten all of mine, a good gob of Aunt Cammies and she and Robina were done. It was then time for me to say good night, and I did so, forgetting, on my way to Lyle's to feed poor Grandpa who wasn't waiting for me on my Gallery. Saturday night courting, I reckon.

Jusque dix heure, j'ai parle avec un ami, --geographie des Etats Unis, le cinema, opera a cheval, etc., etc. ....Alors,.... a fin.....mercie et au revoir.



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June 9th - Sunday.

I slept late this morning, now awakening until five fifteen when Frank arrived with my coffee. As usual, we got caught up on what had happened in and about the plantation since last we saw each other, and after he had poured my coffee and lighted my cigarette, he began giggling and said:

"You know that Miss Robina is a sight. Her, she never did wake up when I brought coffee this morning for her and the Madam on the sleeping porch. The Madam and me, we's talked quite a lot, too, but Miss Robina, she jus' went on snoring. I know her, she'll be after me with a stick when she wakes up and knows the Madam and I played that trick on her and never waked her up for her coffee."

I doubt if Robina realizes how much happiness she brings to Melrose, either to Aunt Cammie, Frank or me.

Frank also had something to say about that "silly Bud Williams". It seems the Madam had told him that she would buy a couple of broilers from him if he would bring them on Sunday morning. Of course the word morning is a rather loose term in the realm of predission, but it seems Bud had interpreted it as loosely as possible, having arrive sometime between four and five, and was sitting in the half dawn when Frank arrived. Frank had jumped a mile when he so unexpectedly sighted a figure sitting on the back steps, holding two indistinct creatures with beedy eyes on his lap. Aunt Cammie told me later that she heard Frank say to him: "Aint you got no sense? What you doin' here at this hour,--waken' up the Madam and on Sunday too. Don't you go up there on that sleepin' porch and worry the Madam so early. Looks like you ain't got no sense."

Eight o'clock and Robina came over to my house. Together we went over to Lyle's and spent the morning reading from my Journal. Aunt Cammie came over for ten o'clock coffee, and Frances came to stay for a few minutes, too.

Before dinner Robina fixed a new ribbon on Lyle's typewriter for me, and then looked over my machine in the maisonette, but decided that it would be better to take that one back to Shreveport with her tomorrow so that it could be checked over properly by a mechanic.

After dinner, Frank got Alerta some magnolias in order that she might continue her oil, and Robina and I called on her for a moment to see this canvass and two others which she had done quite a lot with. We liked them.

At three we decided to accept Aunt Cammie's suggestion that we have ice cream. Frank couldn't get any at Bill's saloon, as that is temporarily closed on Sunday's. Robina and I accordingly drove up to Frenchy's, some three or four miles from here along the River. We were out of luck there, however, as Frenchy was all sold out. There were dozens of colored people,--both men and women, loitering around the place,--most of them ~~gayly~~ gayly dressed, having for the most part just been to church,--reckon, since this is the day the funeral sermons are preached for several people who died in this community a year ago this June. I rather like the idea of waiting

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a year to make up your mind what you will say about people who have died. It certainly ought to offer one a perspective, I should think.

As I came out of Frenchy's empty handed, Sam Brown appeared from one of the little knots of colored people. He looked quite spiffy, in black hat, Oxford grey coat, lighter gray trousers and white shoes. In his usual manner he began:

"Yaas, Mam, Miss Robina, Mr. Francois, I sho' would welcome a ride back. These white shoes, they sure does come close to killin' me. Sure thought I'd take 'em off an walk home in my bare feet".

As everyone knows, shoes are a big thing in the life of a southern darkie, for in slavery days they never wore shoes, and so shoes somehow always represent emancipation to them.

And of course if the shoes can only be white they are twice as important to them, since they are not only utilitarian but decorative as well, and proclaim much louder to the world at large that the wear is something on the social ladder. Of course I am not certain white shoes for anyone at Melrose are especially practical, since there are no paved roads here and the dust is often two or three inches deep,--but after all, for the darkie, that is merely a detail, and certainly worthy of no consideration. It is too bad, that like so many people who have had greater opportunity for a development of some sense of a fitness of things in clothes, the darkies invariably buy shoes,--and particularly white ones, that are much too small for them, and yet in spite of the assured misery that come with their wearing, the recompense of their smallness is sufficient unto the discomfort thereof.

And so we dropped Sam at Melrose, and then drove down to Montrose where we found 'cre Cream, and hence back home.

Supper at five thirty, and somewhat in picnic style, for Sunday nights are always without servants and cold suppers are in consequence the order of the day. But this supper was a little different than most Sunday night suppers. It all had to do with the Blessing. For hundreds of times I have heard Aunt Cammie say: "Lord, make us thankful for these gifts, and save us at last, for Christ's sake". But tonight she said: "Lord, make us thankful for these gifts, pardon us our sins, and save us at last, for Christ's sake". All during the meal I couldn't get back to normalcy, pondering upon the circumstances that might have brought about the alteration of the usual litany. I am still wondering, too, how the inclusion of just three or four words in such a brief Blessing could so thoroughly throw me out of balance and so set my imagination to ~~work~~ buzzing a mile a minute.

Just as we were finishing dessert, Ernest Derbanne, the overseer, called, asking Aunt Cammie if she would care to telephone Dr. Wenk, as one of the colored boys on the place had a pain in his side and seemed very sick. The colored boy had asked Mr. Debranne to say



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for him that he had five dollars, and that if it would cost more  
\* for the Dr. to come, not to have him, since that is all the  
money he had. Something tells me the visit will be made and that  
the charge will be precisely five dollars.

Aunt Cammie left immediately to telephone, and we all  
got up from the table. I must confess I felt a little sick to my  
stomach. The thought flashed through my mind that someone had  
once remarked that Louisiana couldn't afford the five charitable  
or charity hospitals she now maintains. I couldn't help wondering  
how much longer the world will tolerate a medical profession that  
is based on a capitolistic theory.

In my opinion, a political system which cannot correct the  
inequalities and evils of its social set up has little or no excuse  
for its existence. It is a pity that we make such slow progress  
toward the establishment of a government "of the People, by the  
People and for the People",--all the people and not just a limited  
number of the lucky ones.

We chatted until nine,--a scandalous hour for Melrose, since  
we always consider eight o'clock as midnight,--and so to bed.

June 10th - Monday.

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It drizzled all night long, and was still half drizzling half  
not drizzling when I awoke about 4:30 in response to Grandpa who  
was knocking at my door.

Frank arrived at five and by six I had bathed and shaved and  
was done with my breakfast.

A little before seven I joined Aunt Cammie, looking tired, some-  
how, and yet radiantly fresh,-- a curious paradox which I have never  
noticed in anyone else.

Frank had already packed the car with plenty of little gifts  
from Aunt Cammie, including fresh vegetables gathered from the  
garden this morning for Robina and certain people in Shreveport to  
whom Robina would deliver them, and a variety of dainties for  
Robina, including a "surprise" package in the form of material for  
a dress which Aunt Cammie had supplied from the Melrose store, letting  
Frank choose the material so that it would seem to be a gift from  
him. He loves to give these little presents, and I must say that  
his selection is usually in excellent taste.

We drove up the river road as far as Natchez, La., and thence  
to the cement highway, catching up in conversation such little odds  
and ends as we hadn't covered yesterday. I rode beyond town, up  
toward Grand Ecore, where eventually I said goodbye, and I so  
walked back to town. It began raining before I reached the  
far end of town, and for half an hour I stood under a friendly  
tree that permitted the soaking to be gradual, as the water trickled  
through the leaves.

When I was nicely dampened, the rain ceased, and so I continued  
my way until J. H. came along, picked me up, took me back to town  
for a few minutes, and so back toward Melrose we both drove in a  
real shower.

~~With~~ On the way in, I stopped at the store for the mail,--  
since it was a little after nine, and with a change in schedule of  
the Texas and Pacific Railroad, letters will now reach Melrose at  
eight in the morning instead of noon, as heretofore.

It was a good mail, with three letters from Manhattan and two  
from Natchez. These are directions I like mail to come flying from.  
I must say, however, that it's going to take a little time to  
get accustomed to having mail half way between breakfast and  
10 o'clock coffee instead of the mail with demi-tasse to which we  
have so long been accustomed.

Dinner done, and I listened for a few minutes to the radio,  
as Mussolini's speech, declaring war on England and France, was  
broadcast from Rome, and so over to Lyle's where Aunt Cammie  
and I jotted down a lot of particulars regarding Cane River  
genealogies, particularly in reference to the Cloutiers,  
Prudhommes and Metoyers. As we left the house, for a little tour



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og the gardnes, we noticed a little rabbit on the lawn. Obviously it had been dead for some time, for later, as Sam Brown was burying it, he remarkd: "'Dat animal sure been a moping. Musta done died some days yonder.'" By this strange talk, I gathered that the flesh had begun decomposing.

Four o'clock and I called Alberta who wanted to join us to hear Roosevelt speak at 4:15, as he would do, according to a report I had heard from a Berlin broadcast, although I hand't heard about such a speech from the American radio. But there must have been some mixing of signals as between Berlin and Washington, since the speech didn't go on the air at 5:16, although an American newscast announced it at that time for 5:15. We accordingly chatted until that hour, with the radio playing in a subdued fashion, so that we would get the station immediately when the speech started. At precisely 5:15, however, the radio stopped. I tried the lights in the house. They didn't light. Something must have gone wrong with the current at the Montgomery power house some miles from here. We waited a few minutes more, as the current has never been shut off more than a minute since I have been here. Nothing happened. I accordingly wandered over to the store where I discovered Eugene had his car parked before the store gallery, and from its radio we listened to the speech, coming from Charlotte's ville, Virginia, where the President was speaking from that loveliest of American campuses,--the University of Virginia. I wasn't surprised that he voiced cooperation in the supplying of materials for the allied powers. I wasn't surprised that he took a crack at the totalitarian states, but I was a little startled when he said that Italy had stabbed her neighbor in the back. Those are ~~arexxx~~ fairly stong words from the head of a friendly power to another. . At the conclusion of the speech, the lights in the store suddenly went on,--a curious coincidence that the radios in all this area,--save for those in automobiles should have been silenced for just the du ation of the speech.

Supper at six, and afterward we went to Aunt Cammie's r om where Alberta sat in the big chair, reading the Times Picayun to herself, while Aunt Cammie and I s t on the sofa, reaing the letters of 'ean Frudhomme until 7:45 when Joe Henry appeared from Texas, unanno need, bringing Aunt Cammie's grandson, Pat, with him. It seems the 'at's mother, Eugenia, estranged from Joe, is taking a summer course at the 'ormal in town. I wish she had written a letter now and then druing the winter to Aunt Cammie, it might have made things so much more fortunate for Pat, now that he is here to spend the summer. . Eight o'clock and I said goodnight, and with grandpa, who was waiting for me on my gällery, I came ove to Lyle's and so the both of us folded up our beards.

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June 11th - Tuesday.

Dawn, gray and prolonged, with daylight struggling through vast cloud banks that might prove to be mist that would rise and evaaporate or on the other hand might be clouds that would eveuntually dropped earthward in blankets of rain.

I didn't linger long after my second cup of coffee, but rather leaped from bed to my typewriter to rip off a couple of letters before breakfast,--and with food out of the way, back to my machine again to knock off a couple more before eight o'clock and the mail came and went.

The incoming mail was of little interest, but even that we had to hold aside until later as guests arrived and had to be entertained with benefit and pleasure, I fear, to no one.

After dinner I stuck by machine until coffee time, after which I decided to get a little sunshine, ~~and~~ -- for the cluds dissolved about 1:30 and I had need of exercise.

And so over Cane River I went, and up to chat with Zeline for a little while. I found her busy over her washboard which she labored on outside and to the left of her front door. Now in her eighties, she is still remarkably vigorous, but I imagine was glad of an excuse to let her washing go for the moment to chat and rest.

She said her rheumatism was bothering her some as was her heart, but on top of this she found something to chuckle about, and was soon lost in stories of local doings, nearly all of which had a humorous twist to them which she underlined at intervals as she chuckled again, not only at her own amusement but also as a means of rounding out an episode which would be perfectly completed by her low, subdued laugh. For example, she spoke of some poor child in the neighborhood which she had helped bring up. "You see, Mister Francois, it was like this: One night just after sunset, a white man who lived over across the river was passing along this road when he met that ~~friskayx~~ frisky colored girl coming from church... ah, haha, hah....."..... et, puis, Monsieur Francois, moi a soixant ans, j'ai trouve sa petite enfante dnas mon lit....ah, hah, hah.....

And so her stories ran along, sometimes in English, sometimes in French, until she got up, hobbled into the house, shoed out a dozen chickens scratching in there on the earth packed floor, made some lemonade, brought out a glass for both of us, and then continued with her tales.

About five we said au revoir, and I ~~me~~ came back down the road along the river as far as the saloon at the bridgehead where I saw Joe, Zeline's husband. We shook hands, chatted about the weather and his health which doesn't seem very good. Besides his feebleness, he has a stiff neck today. I asked him if he didn't think a bottle of beer might help it. It was his turn to chuckle, and afterwards he said he thought the beer wouldn't hurt him. And so we sat on the little gallery of the saloon and talked for a little while. He siad Edward had mentioned



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I occupied two houses at Melrose,--both my own and Mr. Lyle's. I must say news gets around.

When he had done, and he had said he thought on beer was just enough to fix up his neck, we said goodby and I returned to Melrose. I met Frank between the big house and my maisonette and he seemed rather radiant, I thought. We spoke of the warmth of the sun, etc., and then he told me that Tony had come up from Magnolia, and was calling on Miss Alberta who was painting in Dr. Miller's cabin. It's inspirational to feel the happiness that radiates from his heart when his boy comes up to see him.

As it was only a little after five, I shaved and bathed before supper. Just as I was dressing, someone knocked on my door. It was Tony, bubbling over with good health and as ingratiating in manner as only a person so endowed from birth can only display with naturalness and with sincerity.

He told me he had been to see Miss Alberta, and he wanted me to see the pretty necktie and handkerchief to match which she had brought him from New Orleans. He said they had had a nice talk, going over all times last year when he used to call on her almost every day to make coffee for her and for her guests. Things seem to be going along alright for him at Magnolia plantation, he said. Because of yesterday's rain and this morning's dampness, he hadn't worked, but otherwise he worked every day, and of course lives with his mother and step father. His father had already told me that he was getting along alright down there, but that he thought the boy missed white people, for he has lived with them so much at Melrose and in New Orleans, learning from his father how to take care of their whims and needs, that he really misses them now that he is living on a plantation where he doesn't ever have any duties around the big house.

Supper and we said Au revoir. I noticed that Tony limped a little. I asked him what the matter might be, and he said he was wearing shoes that were too tight for him. I looked at them and they were white, of course. -- "hades of Sam Brown."

Celeste, just back from somewhere, came over to sit at table when we were almost done, while Aunt Cammie shook poppy seed from the pods into a box that filled more than two quarts. About seven, we sent Celeste on her way, while Alberta, Aunt Cammie and I went up stairs to read from Purdhomme letters until eight.

It was still half light when I said goodnight. When I reached Lyle's house, the sky was still light in the northwest as I looked out over the White Garden. It seemed odd to think of going to bed to sleep. I didn't,--not until after ten.

BTF

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June 12th - Wednesday.

Another dawn of uncertain precipitation, with a mist so heavy one couldn't be sure if it was actually raining or if the water particles were merely hanging in the air before a sun, hidden by the impenetrable cloud-curtains would eventually break through and draw the moisture up into heat that would dissipate them.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Between coffee and breakfast, I took my morning exercise on my typewriter, knocking off two long letters and two short ones before Frank came back again. I accordingly had plenty of time to get it all to the store before the postman came at eight.

When I returned to Lyle's house, Aunt Cammie was waiting for me. We ran through it hurriedly with particular interest in a couple of nice letters from Manhattan. It seems odd that I never get any mail from France anymore, but I suppose that with Paris falling before the German army some day this week, people in France don't have much time for purely personal correspondence. I so often think of poor Jean and as I do so I re-echo the hope expressed in a letter the other came which came from an old acquaintance who hadn't heard from him either: "Wherever Jean may be, I hope there may be blue sky, too."

With the letter out of the way, I folded Aunt Cammie up on Lyle's sofa, for the malaria is getting her and she must rest often these days. There is more quiet here than there is in the big house, and servants are more hesitant about disturbing her in Lyle's house, too. Closing the draperies and covering her with a quilt, I took the remainder of the mail,--announcements, catalogues, newspapers, etc., over to the big house. I also brought along a copy of Hitler's Mein Kampf, which had just arrived for Dan. I am afraid he will find it rather dull reading, although what Der Furer has to say about the Jews may please him.

At ten I took coffee with Alberta at Dr. Miller's log house where she is painting. As we chatted of Senlis and other towns around Paris where she has done much painting, a young woman appeared on the gallery and asked: "Is Hilda here?"

Well, Hilda wasn't, I am sorry to say, but if she had so successfully succeeded in hiding herself, she had unquestionably found Aunt Cammie first, and so Hilda Perini was at that moment no doubt entertaining the madam a mile a minute, while sleep would be such better entertainment for Aunt Cammie. It seems odd that no one ever telephones from town when they intend calling on people. Perhaps that old business about surprise visits still obtains heard at the store today that they are going to resume motion picture shows at the little saloon of Balthazar, where the Passion Play was given some weeks back. The negroes and mulattoes had much to



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say about the type of pictures they like best, and I recalled a conversation I had held last Saturday evening with one of them. At that time the boy confirmed what I had always heard other boys on the plantation say:--There is nothing in the world like a cow-boy picture.

During the past ten or fifteen years I suppose I have seen comparatively few pictures other than in "New York and Paris, with some showings on ocean liners in between, and somehow I had thought the "horse operas" were as out of circulation and out-moded as "The Bird On Nellie's Hat". But obviously I had failed to take the entertainment value these movies have for the negro.

I am ashamed to say I don't even know the names of these celluloid heroes, although I believe The Lone Ranger and his horse, Silver, constitute one of the big items. "That horse sure got plenty of sense", is the consensus of opinion.

But there are various types of these "horse operas",--a fact I hadn't realized before. As I understand it, The Lone Ranger is primarily a Robin Hood sort of fellow and what you admire is the intelligence of his horse, the cunning and faith qualities of the Lone Ranger's companion, the Indian, Tonto. What's more in movies as typified by this special set up, one is thrilled by the evils that The Lone Ranger leans about and then, through super-human effort, proceeds to correct. I believe there is little or no live interest in this brand. But they seem very popular in spite of the lack of live-interest.

There is another variety of horse & opera, however, which seems to appeal even more to the colored youths. It's curious, but I can't remember the name of the hero, but it is something with King attached to it,--either as a first, middle or last name. In this type, there is a strong love interest, thoroughly mixed in with the physical prowess, intelligence of the horse, evil of the villain and nobility of the hero. A drink had relaxed the leech that otherwise would have restrained him in his relations toward me, and being alone except for me, he dared to try out the word "wonderful" which had been new to him but which after hearing me use it, he found good and appealing to his vocabulary. He told me about the fine picture he had seen in a manner rather like this:

King liked that girl jus' natural. It was wonderful. Look like his horse could tell it, too,--plumb full a sense. But that no account man, he done stole the girl. But King, he knowed it and his horse knowed it, too. It was wonderful. And so they chased em, and after a while they caughtup wid 'em and they fit. And King, he done fell off his horse, but that horse, look's like he was just natural smart and he just knocked that no 'ccount out of his saddle, and then the two men, they fit and fit, but King, he sure did whip that no 'ccount. And then King's horse came up and King put his arm around his neck. He sure likes that horse. And then King went over and got the girl who was in the bushes, plumb scared, and she was sure glad to see him, and he sure kissed her and it was wonderful."

And there you have what the young mulatto enjoys, but it is

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June 13th - Thursday.

I awoke at four, with Grandpa, who must have let himself out during the night, knocking at the screen door for admittance.

Back to bed again as the first suggestion of day light stumbled through the vast veils of mists, but I didn't go back to sleep, particularly because Grandpa seemed to have so much laundry work to be attended to, and because he kept moving from one position in the bed to the other. Frank arrived a little after five, and after pouring my coffee and lighting my cigarette, went into a conversation with Grandpa who hadn't yet gone to sleep. Frank has a cataract on his right eye but his left eye sees well, and immediately he noticed that there were little spots of blood all over the white counterpane. He picked up Grandpa's left foot tenderly and found it was still bleeding a little. I reckon there must have been an encounter with Celeste's Persian monster.

Both before and after breakfast I hammered out some mail until Aunt Cammie came over for our morning chat about eight. She wasn't feeling well, what with the 90 grains of quinine she was taking, and so I persuaded her to line down on the long sofa and rest for a little while. I fixed up the Osnaberg graperies, and stole out quietly with the mail, lingering at the store until the postman arrived with the incoming letters which I took to the big house and left, going on to Alberta's, for she was painting at Dr. Millers.

Coffee arrived at ten at her house, while the Madam slept on an Lyle's. Alberta and I talked a great deal about Paris, as the morning news said that it would fall before the Nazi's some time during the day. Alberta had had a wonderful time at Senlis, north of Paris and some place that sounded like Saint Ane, but I think I must have misunderstood her, as I never heard of a jackass being sainted.

I greatly enjoyed Alberta's reactions to Europe and her enthusiasm for those times when people took her for something other than an American. Alberta is a mousy little woman of some 55 summers, having been born at Fissletown, Ohio. I am uncertain as to the spelling of the place, but it sounds like that, although it may be another Saint Ane. She told me of her surprise in Toledo, Spain when an American had recognised her immediately as one of his compatriots. She said she was in a great hall of an old, old building on a morning after she had been in the town for three days during which time she hadn't spoken a word. As this man entered the hall,--it later turned out that he was a tourist from Iowa,--Alberta heard him asked the guard something in English. Enghanted at the possibility of speaking with someone and thinking she would surprise him, she stepped up to him and announced: "I am from the United States."

"God Lord, Sister, I can tell that all right. Which part of the country do you come from?"

Alberta was so disappointed that he could have guessed from her speech and manner that she hailed from America.



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11:30 and we went over to my house to listen to new broadcasts from Europe. As we listened, Sister blew in, but we shushed her. She sat for a moment and then discovered certain treasure I had half concealed on the balcony. She pointed to it violently and asked where it had

come from. I shook my finger at her, and pointed to the radio, and in a minute or two she flew out, consumed with curiosity but more moved with impatience to get on to someplace where some one would talk with her, or listen to her talk..

Dinner was dull, what with the Dr. and his wife present, and every one pondering over the war.

All afternoon I worked at my machine until supper time when I joined Aunt Cammie, Alberta and Eugene at table. Pat had gone down to Cloutierville to spend the night, and J. H. was still in the field. He came in for dinner when we were at dessert. He said that the fleas were beginning to work at the cotton, and that unless it rained heavily during the next 12 or 24 hours, he would have to have an airplane come to spray the fields with sulphur. This will be quite a costly effort, as sulphur, thanks to the war, is extremely scarce. But it will be more expensive to let the fleas continue their ravages, as they eat little squares in the stems that hold the bowl to the plant, and soon after their attack the bowl withers and falls off, so that the plant produces no cotton whatsoever.

After supper Aunt Cammie and I read further from old Mississippi Diaries while Alberta sat in the big arm chair and read today's Times Picayune.

But Aunt Cammie was feeling herself, although her humor held as it always does, but a little before eight I said goodnight, picked up Grandpa at my house, and went over to Lyle's. I didn't bother to turn on the lights, for day wasn't finished outside, and already a fattening moon was adding to the reflection of the sunset. I didn't go to sleep immediately, and when the clock struck nine I noticed that a fire-fly must have come in through the door with me, for it was flashing about the tester of the great bed, flitting along the ceiling and hurrying along the draperies as though on some urgent business. I thought of Pavlova whom I had seen give an interpretation of the Glow-worm, and thus compose, I fell asleep.

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June 14th - Friday.

Another dawn and another setting of oyster-grey clouds and dripping cloud banks. I must say this country goes in for intensities whether it be sunshine or moisture.

With my first cup of coffee, Frank lighted my cigarette with some difficulty. When he had gone I tried to light another with the matches on my console table. I could muster up a spark. I tried another box in the library but they would even fizzle. There is still wood in the fireplaces. What a pity I never took up boy-scouting and Indian craft aimed at conflagrations.

After breakfast at home, I returned to Lyle's to work on his machine. Aunt Cammie came over at eight thirty, but decidedly wilted by the excessive quinine she is still taking. We chatted for a few moments, and then I persuaded her to rest for a time on Lyle's sofa. She told me that the racket of my typewriter in the next room wouldn't disturb her, but I thought it just as well not to soothe her to sleep in such a manner, and so I went over to see Alberta in Dr. Miller's cabin.

It was ten minutes of ten, and she was already dressed and her painting rolled up and her bags packed. She herself was rocking nervously, asking me first of all where ever I thought Frank could be to help her with her things. As she doesn't leave until a quarter of two, I told her that she need have no fear for Frank would take care of her in all good time.

She conceded that he might be back in time, but she certainly was just as nervous as ever, even though she didn't voice her emotions.

McKinley brought coffee shortly and we chatted for half an hour, for the most part covering the field of Christian Science in which she finds herself an ardent believer. One or two of her thoughts on illness and particularly on the reason for people having malaria I found quite different from anything I had ever heard before. One she had been afflicted, she said, because some people who occupied an apartment in a house next to hers in New Orleans had projected the malady to her through their thought. They belonged to a faith which is considered Universal and accordingly must have been at variance with her concepts of life. Added to this lack of harmony was a mistaken feeling on their part that she had been the cause of having them ejected from their apartment, or at least had been instrumental in keeping them from re-newing their lease, and in retaliation they had therefore projected the idea of malaria toward her, but of course she had cured it through the good offices of her reader.

She confided in me that it was perfectly clear to her that Aunt Cammie has malaria because she is a Presbyterian and lives



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lives in a community which is made up in vast preponderance of people who belong to the Universal Church. She says that she knows the churchmen in the little Metoyer edifice are the ones who cause her to suffer from malaria by projecting the thought in her direction. Imagine me always having been so dumb as to suppose the malady came from a mouquite.

11:30 and news from abroad of the Nazi's entering Paris and that Hitler will speak from Versailles on the 28th of June on the anniversary of the signing of the Versailles Treaty. I hope he doesn't know the birth certificate of the United States was signed at Versailles. It wouldn't make him like it any better. It's such a pretty place, too, it seems a pity it has had to house so many cheap politicians in the last 70 years.

And as I hear its name mentioned over the air, I find myself thinking of my old friend, Marechal-Beaupre, the Curator, and wondering if he is there today to hand over the keys to the palaces to the Nazis. One of the last times I was his guest, I remember Ramsay MacDonald, then British Prime Minister was in Paris, and his daughter Ishbel, came out to Versailles and the three of us picked violets in the park of the Grand Trignon, before having tea in the big palace. If, as a youth, I ever had any exalted aspirations, it was at Versailles, and at Versailles I have loved man as nowhere else in the world, and so I suppose it is only natural that I should find myself thinking often today of what fate may have in store for this grandest place on earth.

Dinner at twelve and the rain came down in torrents, not slackening the slightest as Alberta, with Frank escorting her with her duffle and me holding a parasol, assisted her into the car that would start her on her journey.

Aunt Cammie rested all afternoon, foregoing the coffee hour while for myself, I took to the big road for a little walk beyond the bridge. I saw Frank on the road and together we laughed and talked in the rain as we floundered through the big mud puddles.

Supper without Aunt Cammie, and then for an hour beside her on the sofa, talking over little fracasas that at present divide the servants and then on to problems that must have called for supervision in ante-bellum households when people like David Hunt, for example, had 1700 slaves to be kept busy and in line.

Eight o'clock and we said goodnight, with Grandpa and me sitting for an hour in Lyle's house before going to bed.

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June 15th - Saturday.

Another dawn, another wakening to the sound of rain. If the fleas haven't been washed off the cotton before long it will matter very little since the cotton itself will be drowned itself, so fleas or no fleas will make little difference.

About seven the rain slackened a little, and I accordingly thought I would get into the big road. I made it as far as the cane river bridge and a little way down the Montrose lane, but it wasn't long before I was bogged down, and so turned back as far as the saloon on the gallery of which Frank was waiting to get the Saturday supply of meat.

There were some other hangers on, awaiting ~~the~~ the opening of this poor man's club. By eight thirty Bill appeared and so things got under way.

I was back home a little after nine, and worked all morning, save for a few minutes with Aunt Cammie and Celeste who had come over to call.

Dinner and much talk about the collapse of France, with 100 per cent Americanism running high. Rayne though Lindberg should be sent back to Germany because he said the U. S. aviation was not equal to the German. Curious how easily he become as autocratic as the totalitarian powers at whom we rail for their autocracy.

Some nice mail, Shreveport, Watchez and New York but nothing from the islands.

With the rain continuing in torrents, I found myself getting depressed as I thought of little Marcel and Marie who were in central France the last I knew, and of poor Jean who was in Paris. And where is Macy Allard and all the rest of the people I had known and loved so much.

But Frank came along, and told me that for several days past he had seen a nice big magnolia high up on a tall tree in the front garden and "would I love it?". I told him I would, and so together we got a long pruning knife attached to a pole, and drenched to the skin we gathered magnolias and I forgot for moment all those things I had been made sadder by.

Supper and a table greatly reduced in covers as Eugene and I were the only ones present, Aunt Cammie being to ill to come down stairs. Afterwards I joined her for an hour or so in her room to chat a little before saying goodnight.

A little before eight Grandpa and I went over to Lyle's house, the dying day still lingering in the north west, while a brilliant new moon gradually overcame the dissolving clouds. There were to be two dances these evening for the colored people. I gave my blessing to one of them, wrote some until nine and then retired, but not to sleep, for my thoughts were busy with people and places I had once known and loved so well on the other side of the Atlantic. BTF.



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June 16th - Sunday.

It was pleasant to wake up around two o'clock and take a little walk up and down the brick paved gallery with Grandpa, for the night was flooded with moonlight and the air was fresh with moist scents from Saturday's rains and the lazy breeze carried a muffled echo like a prolonged, augmenting whirr of the eal that nests in the live oak.

Back to bed again, I awoke once more two hours later, but the moonlight had dissolved and the only sound from without was the patter of rain. There seems to be no limit to this humidity department.

Up on one elbow for coffee and a cigarette when Frank arrived a little after five. We ran over plantation happenings that had transpired during the night and nothing much seemed new, and unfortunately one item seemed all too old,--the fact that McKinley seems determined to cause little unpleasantnesses for Frank. McKinley is silly if he thinks he can get away with such business.

At nine I had coffee with Aunt Cammie who feels miserable what with all the coffee ~~xxxxxxx~~ quinine she is taking. We moved up our coffee hour so that we might chat for a moment of mutual enthusiasms before the guests of the day arrived.

The rain ceased falling about noon and the sun came out to make the humidity just steam. By three o'clock it was raining again. When Frank brought my tray, we went over plantation labor in times such as these. I asked him about the cotton and he said the rain hadn't hurt it yet, although the weeks would sure be growing now, but, he said "it'll be too muddy for the ladies to hoe tomorrow". I loved it. And as I smiled to myself, I thought how much happier this world would be if only some of us who can differentiate between a woman hoe-hand and a lady could only have the kindness that with faithfulness dominates heart of pure gold.

I listened for a time to broadcasts from Europe, telling of the new Vichy government in France and its request for an Amistice from Hitler. Thus cracks up and empire and an Age.

We had supper early, and afterwards Aunt Cammie and I chatted until eight, when I went to Lyle's house, undressed, and sat down at my typewriter to write Christian a letter. There was an interruption and a lie, but only momentary, and so until ten I banged off letters, but somehow couldn't make the one I really wanted to write carry half that I wanted to impart.

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June 17th. - Monday.

I certainly wanted to take a long walk this morning, and went to bed determined to do so on the morrow, but I had counted without the weather.

For a change, it was pouring when I awoke, and pour it did all day long.

I took breakfast leisurely, listening to various radio news reports, many of which were concerned with speculation as to what terms the totalitarian powers would impose on France. Again I thought of the endless condemnations I had heard during the past 20 years of the terms of the Versailles Treaty, how often the Germans had spoken of its unfairness, how often the rest of the world had spoken of its lack of wisdom. It will be interesting to see what sort of a model this 1940 German innovation will be.

All morning I worked at my machine, and all morning it poured as hard as it could.

Dinner and afterward more work until

In his characteristic manner of speech, Frank said: "The Madam, she wants ice cream, her. She say all of youse have to have ice cream, her."

Early in the afternoon, Frank and I had had a chat about little family feuds running up and down Cane River. At the mention of ice cream, I said I thought it would be a good idea if I went after it, stopping at Felix Laurens's on my way to get a hair-cut, for there I would get all the latest news from Frank's sister, Pearl, who has fallen out with Frank's wife. But I fiddled around until almost four before starting, and so Aunt Cammie thought we might let the ice cream go until the morrow. I accordingly donned my raincoat, and started puddle-umping toward the bridge. Tony passed me in the road, riding in a car with some youth living down Magnolia way. I got a nice coating of mud from their jitney. At the bridge I saw Frank on horseback, and together we chatted some more in the shelter of the cafe. I discovered that salt makes beer foam like mad.

When the shower had slackened a little, I walked over to Felix's house, but could use no one. Back home again, I bathed and shaved, having accomplished little except a pleasant hour's conversation with Frank and Joe Roque. Supper and Celeste came to sit with us until eight o'clock when J. H. came home from a bank meeting. We talked politics. I seemed to enjoy listening, and urged us not to stop but we all said goodnight at 8:30.

And so over to Lyle's house with Grandpa. We sat up a little later than usual. I awoke at midnight, the moon was out but it was damer than I have ever known it inside. two, three and four, au revoir and to sleep.

BTF



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June 18th - Tuesday.

Dawn, and I regret to say, in positive duplication of yesterday's and ever so many days before,--with rain falling so steadily that it almost seemed as though the ground, having become completely saturated, was letting the streaks of rain pile up toward the sky, or somehow succeeding in suspending the raindrops between heaven and hearth, but much nearer the globe's surface.

I worked all morning at my machine, save for an hour with Aunt Cammie at my house where Henry is arranging some beautiful windows for me.

I am hoping that he may finish these shortly as the doings in Court during the coming week may cut into the time of more than one Melrose resident, including Henry and Sam Brown, too.

For the lawyers are now working on two murder cases for presentation within the next few days. Henry will testify at the trial of Elmer's husband, as Henry was at the saloon last June 19th when Elmer's husband stabbed a white man to death.

Sam Brown also has to testify at a murder case, too, but not the same one. For Sam's testimony ~~has~~ has to do with another negro who killed a man on Melrose some 19 years ago, the murderer having only recently been apprehended.

Dinner at twelve, and with demi-tasse the mail, which was heavy with letters from all around the country, and one or two which meant much to me.

Until about four I worked steadily at my machine as the rain continued to pour down outside. After coffee, however, I decided I simply must stretch my legs and get some fresh air, even though it would naturally be fully as wet as fresh. I accordingly slipped on my raincoat and ploughed through the mire and puddles as far as the bridge. Frank came along on his horse, and we both remarked upon the November like aspect of the landscape, for the low lying rain clouds scudded along the pastures and cotton fields, passing through the trees and fences like a ghost might penetrate and at the same time pass through a closed door.

We were both cold and wet, and it seemed only right that we should be even more so, to be in complete harmony with with mournful atmosphere. Inside the cafe it was more cheery, and a bottle of beer did much to tone us up.

Back home in time to ~~change~~ bathe and change before supper, and so on to the big house, where Aunt Cammie and I talked for an hour as she reclined on her sofa. At eight we said goodnight, and by eight-ten, both Grandpa and I were in bed.

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June 19th - Wednesday.

Of the note-worthy days of this year's calendar, this one should be underlined at Melrose, for not only is it Emancipation Day when all the black negroes let joys be unconfined, and in contrast the mulattoes work harder than any other day in order to proclaim to the world that they never had to be set free since they never were slaves,--but there is another reason why today will be remembered. For the first time in ten days the dawn came up all blue and gold, and never all day did it rain.

Frank came a little earlier than yesterday, and so Grandpa and I got under way a little earlier too. By a little after six, we had had our breakfast and I was at the front gate, headed for a long lloked for walk in the big road.

The little area before the store and the banks of Cane River was deserted in the early morning sunshine, save for one figure,-- Sam Brown in holiday attire, which included a spiffy gray suit and of all things those killing white shoes which he had worn a week ago when Hobina gave him a lift as far as Melrose garage when he took off this fancy footwear and walked home barefoot. It seems that the shoes don't hurt if he doesn't walk, and so he stood there stark still, all dressed up, it seemed and no place to go in that early morning sunshine.

Aunt Cammie says that shoes mean a lot to a negro,--or at least in reconstruction days the shoe stood as a symbol of independence to the negro because in ante-bellum days most slaves had gone barefoot, so that ownership of a pair of shoes proclaimed to the world that a colored man once out of his former status. Probably this feeling for shoes continues vaguely in the rural negro today, and of course a pair of white shoes carries a message twice as strikingly as just ordinary black or tan shoes might.

It was a little after seven when I crossed Cane River bridge and headed down the Montrose lane. After going half a mile, I realized that the voice I had heard calling was so persistent that it couldn't be a field hand yelling at a mule, but must have been someone hailing me,-- which is practically the same thing in a way, since I had displayed about a much stubbornness in disregarding the voice. I looked around, and there up the road was Celeste on horseback, waving her arms vigorously as she applied her crop to the horses back and at the same time hailed me. I waited for the horse and rider to catch up with me, and laughed at Celeste for riding a horse that couldn't ~~keep~~ better time than I. It seems that the horse didn't purpose to trot, and its gait was slower than my speed, so in her pursuit of me, Celeste had gradually seen the distance between us widening. We chatted for a few moments, passed the time of day with a youth from Clarence Compton's, who was headed toward the dentist in Montrose to have a tooth drawn, spoke of going swimming one of these days down at the Hertzog Camp, and so said goodbye, with Celeste heading back toward Melrose while I continued my journey toward Montrose.



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I went as far as town, and rode back part way, so that by 11:30 I had probably walked about 16 miles. When almost home, Felix Lorenz came along in his car, picking me up for a ride the last quarter of a mile to the bridgehead, where we stopped for a beer at the saloon. I was oozing with perspiration and my face burned pleasantly, for the sun was hot and the humidity high. The beer never tasted better.

Back home by noon, I was rather tired but not so much so that I couldn't eat too much. There had been little mail, so it didn't ~~take us long~~ take us long to run through it, and for this I was glad, because Aunt Cammie doesn't seem at all well, and I was glad that she might lie down again without feeling she must run through a lot of correspondence on my account.

Sister blew in a little before one, with no end of news concerning her trip to Shreveport yesterday. Among other things we learned was that Cliff Byrd's acquaintance in Michigan had purchased Belle Grove, near White Castle, Louisiana, and having sunk about all their money,--three thousand dollars,--in the place, they purposed to put a roof on the place and do nothing more about its restoration, since no more money was available. "With all the windows and doors, as well as pretty much of one side of the house gone, I can't imagine even a roof will help stave off the ruin of this most pretentious 76 room house of ante-bellum days.

For half an hour, I retired, to bath and shave and get into some fresh clothes, and then after coffee and ice cream, I headed for Zeline's to take her some tonic. I found her on her front gallery sewing, telling stories to three nice little mulatto boys about 11 or 12 years old. Her ability at presenting a story and her constant sly humor seems to fascinate the children as well as the grown ups. We chatted for an hour, and then, on learning that Joe was inside, I went in and found him lying in bed, suffering considerably in his joints and not able to sit up. Zeline wafted away a chicken that was perched on the headboard of the bed, and I sat down and chatted with Joe for a while, although I found it difficult to understand him, as he was lying face down, and his voice was muffled in part by the snowy pillow which so greatly enhanced his light chocolate coloring and his fine grey hair.

A little after five, I said good by to both of them and so back to the bridge and so home for supper. In front of the store, however, I noticed that an airplane was wheeling back and forth at intervals of a few minutes. It was the Brazeal boy who had come to dust the Melrose cotton fields with sulphur, spreading the powder smooth and wide by airplane. It was a beautiful sight to see the clouds of sulphur dropping like ribbons of clouds, and then with the sudden termination of the cloud banner, see the plane suddenly mount just above the tops of the trees, circle sharply, and then settling down close to the cotton rows again, re-commence the beautifully formed curtains of dust.

As Eugene, Frank and I stood for a few moments chatting in front of the store, watching the airplane appear, wheel about sharply, and then disappear again beyond the trees, two tall colored girls passed by

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and very politely they said "Good evening all."

One of these girls, who was probably in her twenties, was extremely tall and angular. Her dress was of some black & flimsy stuff. The other girl was dressed in a cheap figured white material. As they proceeded on their way and had reached a point about half way between the store and the garage some 75 yards down the road, the airplane suddenly appeared in its accustomed course, banked heavily and in so doing put the fear of God into the hearts of the dusty maidens. The one in white stood as though transfixed, and too frightened to move, while the one in black, suddenly kicked up her heels, and seeming more like an elegated gibbon than a human being, she bolted for the store, making the three steps to the gallery in one leap and so disappeared inside.

Frank burst out laughing and Eugene grinned. A second later the airplane had disappeared again beyond the trees, and the colored girl stepped out on the store gallery, & seemingly re-assured in

part that we were still there, but still not quite certain of what next to expect.

"Lord", she giggled foolishly, "I sure thought he'd done caught up with me."

And pulling at her skirt nervously, and giggling the while, she & half ran, half trotted to her girl friend who by now was doubling over with silly hysteria.

At this point the dinner bell rang, and Eugene and I joined Aunt Cammie, Pat, and Dan who had just returned from Texas and Mexico.

With seven o'clock we listened to European news bulletins, and so undertook some reading from Foot's Casket of Reminiscences, which we found quite dull. At eight we said goodnight, and before nine I was asleep.



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June 20th - Thursday.

Two days of sunshine in a row. It seems incredible after all the unending downpour of the last eight or ten days.

Frank arrived a little before five, laughingly remarking that we sure had to get going early today, what with all them weeks to be chopped out in the cotton patch.

Breakfast accordingly was ~~in the~~ stepped up a quarter of an hour earlier, too, so that I was knee-deep in correspondence a little after six. A little before seven, Pat came to make his morning call. He asked me if I would go horseback riding with him. I said I would. And so off he skipped to see Frank and ask him to saddle our horses for us.

A few minutes later he returned, slightly crest-fallen, to say that everybody seemed to be riding this morning, -- J. H., Celeste, Dan, the overseer, and heaven know who all, so that we would have to put off our ride until later in the day or until tomorrow. That was alright with me, as I had plenty of things to do.

Aunt Cammie came over a little after nine, -- bringing me a lovely bouquet of stripped Confederate lilies which she had just gathered from the West garden. As always, her humor was high, but it was obvious enough that she wasn't feeling up to par, and so she consented to lie down for a few moments. We had coffee together a little after nine, and by 9:30, we went out to the side gate where Celeste was waiting for us in her car, to drive us over to Madame Aubert-Rocque's. Aunt Cammie had a package of food, including tongue, bread, etc., and another similar item which we would leave at Zeline's for her, too.

We found Madame Aubert-Rocque rather less well, but withal quite enchanted to see us. Her place, -- a mud house with some lively old hinges on the doors and linds, always intrigue my curiosity, and she is always kind about letting me look around the house while she and Aunt Cammie talk. This morning the conversation had to do primarily with the Prudhommes, and especially the branch of that family who were kin of Alphonse Prudhomme. Madame Aubert-Rocque was rather hazy as to exact identity, but it seemed clear that one of the Prudhommes, possibly Len or Victorin, had a colored family that lived on Cane River below Melrose. Records regarding many of these families can no longer be consulted, since Father Regis, of the Melrose or Isle Brevelle Church, burned most of the baptismal records some years ago when he was the priest here. It was shortly after this that Father Regis begot a mulatto baby by one of the colored girls of his church, the child having been christened Innocence, -- and shortly afterward, Father Regis had to relinquish his charge at Isle Brevelle in favor of some other community. Begetting Innocence was one thing, but burning the church records was much more unforgivable in my estimation.

There was some talk, too, about "Uncle" Clay, an old mulatto who as a boy had been the pampered son of the mulattoes who own Melrose in the old days. Everyone agreed that in later years, Clay's wife

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had treated her poor old husband with more meanness than anyone could imagine. Aunt Cammie could recall that Clay's wife said that it was only what Clay deserved, because as a boy he had lived in the big house, had had a body servant, etc., etc., so that any meanness she could think of to hand out to him only balanced the easy life he had enjoyed in ante-bellum days. Curious attitude, it would seem, but one which seemed to please Clay's wife enormously in carrying it out. I believe it was "Uncle" Clay's daughter who had conceived Innocence with the help of Father Regis. It was said that poor "Uncle" Clay never did know much about this particular performance although his wife knew, and abetted the liason. Dennis Rocque, Madame Aubert's son, and a man of some 60 or 65 years, had much to say about Uncle Clay, and how his wife had always treated him "like a foot rag".

We returned home about eleven, and I resumed my relations with my typewriter for a few minutes when Pat arrived, saying that his Grandmother wondered if I would come over for coffee. I found it strange, as we had already had coffee, but I soon learned, on stepping in the library that a guest had arrived, and that Aunt Cammie thought I might be able to help the man out in his search for particulars regarding the Mississippi River in the part it played during the Confederate War. Aunt Cammie withdrew to her room to rest, after asking Mr. Crosby, the visitor to stay for dinner.

Mr. Crosby lives in a suburb of Los Angeles, is an architect, and takes time out from his business now and then to turn off a book. His last volume, -- a Bobbs Merrill publication is entitled: WE HAVE MET THE ENEMY, and, as I understand it, has to do with the naval encounters on the Great Lakes. His new volume will be a novel centering around naval engagements on the Mississippi during the Confederate War.

After dinner, Aunt Cammie retired again, and Mr. Crosby and I talked of many things. He, like most people, was not informed regarding the peculiar status of the old mulatto civilization that characterized Cane River in the Melrose neighborhood from the beginning of the 19th century, and continuing down as a distinct entity as opposed to either the white or negro gradations of society in this locality. Mr. Crosby spoke of the number of fine new houses, built during the past few years in the Los Angeles region by wealthy Californians who for the most part employed an exceptionally fine architect, one Williams, a mulatto. I must learn more about this person.

At three o'clock, Frank brought us lemonade and ice cream, after which Mr. Crosby, Pat and I drove over to the other side of Cane River opposite Cane River, for a short swim. Returning home, Mr. Crosby said goodbye to us all, and so departed on which way toward Alexandria, Baton Rouge, etc.

Supper was at five thirty and after that, we read from old Natchitoches papers, being impressed by one account of a planter being called to order by a Justice of the Peace for having failed to comply with the Louisiana law requiring that an overseer, either white or a man of color, be employed. I don't understand this law and must make inquiry as to why it was ever created.



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At eight we said goodnight. It was still light, now that the longest day of the year is upon us.

Grandpa walked over to Lyle's house with me, but neither of us seemed ready for bed. I accordingly left Grandpa, and walked down the road a piece. Cane River's surface was as silvery and smooth as a mirror, and its reflection of the dying day and the pine trees that grow along the margin was more wonderful than at dawn.

At the station a car was standing before the gallery, and around it were clustered a knot of mulatto youths, listening to a Joe Louis-Goodoy prize fight from Madison Square garden in New York. I joined them, getting as much entertainment out of their observations as from the graphic description of the fight from the ring-side announcer.

Before the fight was over, evening had deepened into night. Vast banks of clouds ranged the western horizon, still snowy white, either from a remote reflection from the long departed sun or from the big golden moon rising in the East. Heat lightning momentarily flooded the western cloud banks with roses, which for the fraction of a second paled the brilliance of the moon, and then flashed out. The radio crackled in sympathy with the heat lightning, and only the stars that spread across the zenith seemed to be impervious to either the light from the moon or the flash from the great cloud formations.

I talked for a little while on the gallery with Leon, who had much to tell me about the tractor he is driving on Melrose fields, and I said hello to Edward who was there with a little friend.

About nine, I said good night to my friends of color, and so sauntered back toward home, remarking upon the unusual circumstances that contrived to make the whole countryside turn momentarily pink and so dissolve the moonlight, as a thunderless wave upon wave of heat lightning in the great pile of Western clouds performed a curious luminary spectacle the like of which I had never witnessed before.

Back home I found Grandpa waiting on the front gallery for me, and so together we both went to bed.

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June 21st - Friday.

Dawn came up a little earlier this morning, earlier than it will any other day in the year. And the day itself was a little longer, too, although not so much because the calendar said so as because certain totalitarian forces in this immediate neighborhood did much to make it seem endless.

Outside the sky was flawless and in the white garden long before Frank arrived with coffee at five, a thrush sang for all the joy of living. And I enjoyed that waking hour the better as I thought of Wilde's lovely picture from the Nightingale and the Rose: "And she carried it to her purple cavern in the hills, and roused the sleeping shepherds from their dreams".

Pat came over to sit ~~with me~~ beside me on my sofa as I ate my breakfast. We spoke of many things, and again I was impressed by the maturity of mind this child displays. We spoke of his Grandmother, and he told me he thought she didn't seem so well this morning. Whether it is the malaria or the endless amount of quinine she is taking to stave off the malaria, I do not know, but surely she is having to fight to keep her head above water these days.

I got out a flock of letters before eight, and from then until coffee time, sat beside Henry who was trying to carry out his ideas of my suggestions as to creating an effect of beautiful double doors in handsomely colored glass of the two windows below the great fan light in my house.

Aunt Cammie came over to sit with us for coffee. She looked very tired, but somehow radiated as usual, an inner glow of radiance which never seems to desert her even in most trying circumstances.

Both of us spilled our cups of coffee, but the effects were less noticeable in my accident, since it was primarily sugar that flew all over the place. In Aunt Cammie's case, however, the deep mahogany brew landed all over her nicely starched white dress, but a mere cup of coffee could hardly be expected to ruffle such a soul, and so we both undertook a second cup and with complete success.

From ten until 12, I worked over at Lyle's on his typewriter while Henry ~~XXXX~~ continued his labors at my house. Noon came but a quiet one, as Sister had come and taken Pat to Cloutierville with her, and there was little conversation at table.

I worked at Lyle's until three when I went over to my house to see how Henry was progressing. The general effect which I had ~~hoped~~ hoped to create had been accomplished, but the details were something of a botch, I must say, since during my absence, Henry had omitted certain specified details which he felt at the time were strenuous. For instance, I had asked him to cover the lower half the window, ~~and~~ completely, so that it would give the impression of the lower half of a Dutch door. He had covered all the glass save for one inch from the frame at the top, explaining that the upper window would cover that inch space where the light streamed in. I asked him to open the upper half of the window to let in air. This frame



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out of the way, the inch of light in the lower frame of course was dreadfully apparant. He merely said: "By golly, I never did think of that".

I had hoped that Aunt Cammie might come over sometime during the afternoon to see the progress we were making, but she was engaged all afternoon in waging a battle for the forces of Democracy. One unique theory which she has always maintained since her child en reached maturity was that they should be permitted to select their own friends, interest themselves in whatever appealed to them and in turn that she should be accorded the same consideration. The indepenence on their part seems to have suited them satisfactorily, but with few exceptions none of them seem to think she deserves likecourtesy. Of course a good time to knock anyone flat is at such a time was the person is physically exhausted. At the end of the day, Aunt Cammie was certainly tired out, but spiritually she was still able to battle, which seemed a great wonder to me.

At supper we were four, with Aunt Cammie too tired to come down. J. H. and I carried what conversation there was. The whole sitting was pretty dull.

After supper I jointed Aunt Cammie and for an hour we read. When J. H. came in to kiss his Mother goodnight, as he always does, he lingered longer than usual, talking about Mexico and Heaven knows what, obviously trying to bridge over some of the strain of the afternoon which, in acceding to the wishes of other members of the family, he had inadvertently made so trying for his mother.

It seem wholly ridiculous that all this tempest should have been stirred up by the replacement of McKinley by Tary, which is scheduled for Sunday. The one person today who seemed quite indifferent about the whole thing is McKinley. So far as the immediate members of the family are concerned, however, I feel that in their wrath over defeat, they will turn their injustice on Aunt Cammie's most trusted and dependable servant, and so he will be made to suffer as a sacrifice to the anger which in reality is in noway direct toward him, .....

And yet I know of innuendoes th t McKinley has dropped against Frank. And I know why he has dropped them, but the cause can scarcely be recorded here, for few readers would understand them and even fewer would be temperamentally equipped to take them in. Sufficient it is to say that as the innocent bystander, Frank has to suffer for a half dozen impulses, none of which is he in any way concerned.

After saying goodnight at eight, Grandpa and I made our way to Lyle's house where we sat for half an hour before going to bed. As I smoked a cigarette, I couldn't help thinking of an old philosophy teacher who had once declared to me:

"Sometimes on a beautiful morning, I look out upon a peaceful world, and I feel convinced that all of life must be Divinely ordered and controlled. At other moments when storms are raging and both the elements and people seem bereft of control or reason, I can only wonder if there is any Divine plan at all".

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June 23rd, - Saturday.

I have lost track of the date, that is of the month, but I do know that it is Saturday, which might eventually reveal if my lack of calendar-consciousness has brought about errors in the date line.

Dawn again, and lest of blue sky and sunshine.

My morning was prosaic enough, with lots of times at my typewriter, and a little with Henry who is adjusting some other windows in la Maisonette.

Aunt Cammie and I ran through the mail with 10 o'clock coffee, but didn't finish it, as she was feeling somewhat under the weather, and it seemed better for her.

She didn't come down for dinner, which was a curious affair as neither Payne, Eugene, Dan or I said anything during the entire meal. I suppose Payne and Dan were sore that McKinley is leaving and thought they might as well take out the ill-humor by saying nothing. It suited me fine. ...but I must say I thought it rather ridiculous.

A little after noon I listened to a broadcast from the forest of Compeigne where the French delegates were signing the Armistice terms with the Germans, and until three, I worked on my machine.

With my lemonade, we ran through the best part of the mail we had neglected in the morning. There was a very valuable piece from New York regarding the Collnization Society for which I felt enormously grateful. There were volumes from the Miss. Hist. Society, too, including Source Material of Miss. Hist., devoted to Jefferson County. We read from this until five and found it a piece of work that W.F.A. should well be proud of.

Supper a little before six, with only Aunt Cammie, Eugene and me gracing the board. It was much more loquacious than the noon meal, and I think we all had a good time.

After supper, before we left the table, McKinley when taking the things away, asked Aunt Cammie if he was expected to work on the morrow. Aunt Cammie pointed out that as Mr. J. H. had hired him, he should really ask him about it when he received his wages that night on his way home. McKinley said he couldn't understand how Frank had mis-understood him in times past, to which Aunt Cammie said that all she knew was that she wanted people who worked for her to be happy and in order to do so they must get on together. McKinley, like a fool, had already told Rita that the job he had hoped to get at Frenchy's wouldn't materialize until he moved up there, and that he didn't want to leave his current abode.



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Aunt Cammie and I made a little tour of the back gardens before going inside at seven o'clock where we read until J. H. arrived about 7:30. Before he came, Aunt Cammie had told me he would never mention McKinley's name, and it turned out that she was quite right.

But contrary to his usual short visit, J. H. remained for half an hour. He had sent over to the saloon for ice cream for Aunt Cammie and me, and as we ate, he gave us a side light into the majesty of the courts.

On Tuesday, Elmer's man goes to trial for the murder of the white man in Bill's saloon last June 18th. J. H. said the murderer's parents had come to him to see if he couldn't help them to get a lawyer. J. H. did. When Aunt Cammie heard the name of the Attorney, she asked J. H. if that person was any good. At that point, J. H. did one of those amazing things which I imagine stands him in such good stead in giving the impression of excessive frankness. With all the tone of conviction and sympathy for the person he was speaking with, he declared: "Why yes, Mother, that man is really a very smart lawyer,--very smart."

I have heard him use the same re-assuring tone on other occasions when he is sometimes merely guilty of wishful thinking, and on other occasions when he declares something to be the truth when it is perfectly apparant to anyone that the situation is just the opposite. For example, during the recent rain, at a time one evening when he had hoped he might plough on the morrow, he declared with all the matter of fact assurance that "It isn't raining any more, Mother,--when in reality the clouds were pelting down torrents against the windows alongside which we were sitting.

And so Elmer's man is to have a very good lawyers. J. H. said of course that in the case when a negro kills a white man there aren't many lawyers who feel it is good for thme to defend the murder. But in the present case, this smart attorney had consented to do it. J. H. said he had seen him at the club frequently,--usually drunk, and that the lawyer had consented to defend the man when J. H. spoke with him last night.

Aunt Cammie asked where the lawyer had his office in town. J. H. responded that in reality the man maintained no office, for he had little need of one in the first place as he was very smart, and besides he had sold his law books and office furniture for whiskey and dope. He surely must be impressive as a great legal light.

And aside from his smartness, J. H. said he had another virtue,--he would accept the case for as little as fifty dollars, while few others would consider it for less than several hundred. But he said the retainer's fee would be handled a little different from the usual manner. Elmer's man's parents had sold a couple of calfs for which they received twenty-five

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dollars. This amount would not be paid to the lawyer until the trial started, so that he would be sober, no doubt, at the trail for ~~the~~ his client's life got under way. Of course no one knew what the man might do if the Court should recess for half an hour during the sitting, but there is no need to cross bridges before one come to them.

All the family hoped to do was to save the man from the gallows. If the man should escape "getting his neck cracked", then another twenty-five dollars would be paid to the defense attorney. If the culprit had to swing, however, the original payment would cover all the charges for the man's services.

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I presume J. H. is one of the cleverest business men I know and I often wonder if much of the confidence he enjoys is not due in large measure to his ability to tell such preposterous things with a calm and seeming confidential frankness that one most feel almost flattered for his courtesy in sharing the matter with one.

And so everyone is pleased, and all of Melrose, except Aunt Cammie and me, will sleep the sleep of the just tonight, for the murder's father and mother will be grateful to J. H. for having secured a lawyer for their son, and at the same time they will be assured by J. H.'s frankness of tone and manner that their son's lawyer is a smart man, and J. H. will sleep well too, for he knows that he has secured about as good a lawyer,--if it could be called that, as could be run down, and he has rendered a service to a Cane River family which will always stand him in good stead.

In business circles, I am sure J. H. must be considered one of the leaders in the State, for not only is he a bank director, but a holder of many offices in various state and antional organizations covering farm questions, etc., etc. His name is in bronze, as a Director, on the administration building of the Normal, and all the unlettered folk along Cane River swear by him. He must be good, and yet I can only marvel at his assurance that Elmer's man has a smart lawyer.



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June 23 or 24th - but Sunday for sure.

Another glorious morning, with full summer in step with the calendar.

Frank arrived about 5:20, and we talked for ten or fifteen minutes about plantation doings since last I saw him at six o'clock last night. We spoke of McKinley's final hours in his role of Melrose cook, and Frank told me of ill feeling that McKinley stirred up through Felix and Earl as against Frank. The whole episode is so very trifling, and yet so extremely interesting as considered from such an angle as "No fury like that of a woman spurned".

After breakfast, I went into the florist business in a big way, getting plenty of great regal lillies, two or three feet tall, for the vase in front of my handsome new doors in my maisonnet and a couple of dozen great dahlias, tinted all the way from pure white through treaked orange to solid crimson for the early American vase of glass and Mat raided one of the big magnolia trees for five or six huge blossoms for the octagon soupiere of oyster porcelaine. An ocean of zinnias and crepe myrtles rounded out the damage I did to the gardens, and yet there is such an opulence of fillers that no one would ever know I had descended on them.

Aunt Camie met me as I was gathering my last armful. Brave as ever, she obviously was feeling even less well and her color was of chalk. Together we looked for and found a copy of Lorenzo Dow's book in the African House, where I also stumbled over a vast edition of the Encyclopaedia of 1778, printed in French. She had purchased the bookcase,--a beautiful example of Cane River handcraft from some mulatto near by a number of years ago. I must investigate this set shortly.

Coming over to Lyle's house, we chatted a little about the advisability of a trip to Hot Springs,--just touching on it, since I feel that she is quite capable of making a decision regarding this matter. We then read from Source Material of Miss. Hist.,--Jefferson County, again remarking upon its excellence. Shortly after much of the children blew in. They had made up their minds that their mother should go to Hot Springs. They began bearing down on her. She was exhausted before they arrived. She couldn't help but be doubly so before they left. It seems so odd how few people in this world have the vaguest idea of how people who are ill should be approached. I was amazed, too, that when it became evident that the baby needed to be changed,--for he had arrived during coffee, the whole performance was carried out,--the baby yelling like a painter, all on the same sofa with its grandmother,--with its father and mother both assisting in the general racket. I could only utter: "Lord, God" in my beard and wonder how a physician at least could imagine that when a person is down physically and spirituall, such rumpuses of all things should be avoided.

The idea was to whisk Aunt Cammie off to Hot Springs on the

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morrow, but I am sure this will not be accomplished, since it is only natural that she might have a couple of things to settle before leaving. J. H. telephone Hobina, who said she would be glad to go and stay at Hot Springs with Aunt Cammie and this pleased everyone, since their mother will therefore not be alone.

The new cook, Mary, being unaccustomed to the vagueries of the kitchen clock served dinner by it, which stepped things up considerably, but even so, dinner wasn't bad, since everyone made a supreme although too evident an effort to make things more talkie than yesterday.

After dinner I worked all through until five, when I had a dip and a shave, and then joined Aunt Cammie,--the rest of her guests having gone. We ate supper leisurely, and read more of Jefferson County until eight o'clock, when J. H. arrived from town with ice cream, after which we all said goodnight, and grandpa and I folded up our beards.



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Monday

June 25th - Tuesday.

Another magnificent morning with the back drop of blue sky bluer than ever behind the screen of giant banana plants and snowy alphas of the white garden.

There was an excessive dew, as both Grandpa and I found out when starting across the formal garden that separates Lyle's gate and my maisonette beyond. The cuffs of my trousers were soaked before I had taken three or four steps while Grandpa stepped gingerly alling until I waited for him and let him ride on my shoulder.

It wasn't an especially dray place that he chose, however, for as we reached the steps to my gallery, we both got a good dash of water from a huge hydaranga-like blossom of the pink crepe-myrtle that hung over the little white columns.

I had bathed, shaved and breakfasted before six thirty, and was out in the big road before seven, after chatting for a few moments with Eugene in the store where I stopped to leave my out-going mail.

And so down the lane, over Cane River bridge and down the Montrose road for a ways when a station wagon drew alling side me and stopped. It was a gay mulato youth in the service of Clarence Compton who had passed Celeste me and me on the same road on horseback last Tuesday or Wednesday. He is striking in appearance and the way he wears his overalls and big straw hat, for some how with his ready smile, revealing a marvellous range of pearly teeth, and a manner that one would expect to fin only on a stage where a Southern scene was being depicted with an eye to beauty and charm, he seems too much litke perfection in these points to b a reality in this or any other actual setting of real rural remoteness.

Of course he asked me to ride, saying he was oing only a short distance, but that he would take me further, which I appreciated, as the sun was already hot.

At the second bayou bridge we said Au revoir, and I continued on my way while he turned back. I traveled rather far, and didn't realize the time slipped by so fast. When ready to turn toward home, I was about 20 miles from there and it was nearly twelve. Shortly Miss Glass came along in her car, stopped and invit d me to ride. She said she was going directly to Melrose, which suited me to a T. Was we sped along the concrete highway, we talked much of this changing world in which we find ourselves today, and she told me a horror story, the like of which turn up so frequently at times such as these but which are almost always more interesting for the imagination they reveal than for their authenticity. Here is Miss Glass's story:

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Her brother lives either in Louisiana or Mississippi, and rents a house to a woman who formerly was a German Jewess, although she has lived in this country a great many years. Sometime after Hitler bega divesting the Jews in Germany of their possession and their hopes of making a livelihood, she responded to his inquiry if he might find a place to live in the town where she lived in the South, and she replied affirmatively. In his n xt letter he told her that he would leave Germany within a certain period,--some couple of months, I believe, and would travel with a distant relative of theirs who lived in a city not far from where he lived in Germany. In the letter he explained that as he would not be able to bring many personal belongings with him, he wondered if there was anything in particular which she might recommend that he might bring that would be of the greatest use to them both. Flippantly the sister replied: "Yes, do by all means bring Hitler's eyes, they are so pretty".

Sometime later, according to the story, the relative from the nearby town in Germany where the youth lived, arrived in America, but she was not accom anied by the youth of whom she had heard nothing in several weeks. In the mail a short time later the woman in America recieved a small box from Germany containing a couple of eyes".

I suppose this is about as revolting a hate-tale as I have heard thus far.

As Miss Glass and I approached the turn from the cement road into the Melrose lane at Montrose, the estate car blew madly behind us, passed and then stopped beside the road. In it were three pe pel whom I didn't recognize at first, but Frank unexpectedly jumped out and came over to speak with me, followed by Pat, and then I recognized Eugabou as the driver. They said Aunt Cammie had worried for fear the sun had overcome me and that they had acco dingly be combing the countryside for me. I was touched by the devotion but sorry I had caused the uneasiness.

I continued as far as the side gate with Miss Glass, and shortly afterward Pat and Frank arrived. Pat and I ate together, for Mary had saved our dinners, while Frank and Rita vied with each other to bring us ten times more than we needed.

I had coffee with Aunt Cammie in her r om, finding her still considerably below par physically but still maintaining the same indomitable gaiety and sense of humor which she always seems able to muster up, no matter how ill she may actually be.

We had grand letters from ~~various~~ from various places, but most especially from New York and Porto Rico. As Consul of France, Christian must find the present situation of his government most confusing, what with one government at Bordeaux under the tutelage of the Nazi's, and another government in London under the wing of the British. It looks as though everyone from the Ambassadors down might be faced with a problem in making up their minds one of these days in the immediate future.



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A little after two Sister blew in and I accordingly blew out after chatting with her for a few minutes. All afternoon I worked at my typewriter, pausing only long enough to have a lemonade in the neighborhood of three.

Before five, however, a knock ~~xxxx~~ sounded on my door. It was Mr. Mat, dressed in trousers only, for in hot weather when mowing the lawns, he always divests himself of shirt, shoes and stockings and so makes hay with abandon. He said Aunt Cammie was allne and so I went over to listen to newsbroadcasts with her.

Supper was at six, and afterward we read from "Jefferson County history, as compiled by the Federal Writer's Project.

We were enchanted to find an account of the "Hemon" or "Haymon" house, on Red Lick road which we had visited last fall, and I had visited again at Eastertide with Kenneth and Rudolph. I never did know how to spell the name of this lovely old place, but from what the colored people said, I took it to be "Hemon". This history, however revealed that this place once belonged to Mrs. Hamar, a niece of Jefferson Davis,--sometime after the Civil War.

It had been buildt in 1857 by Walter Wade and her he and his wife entertained lavishly with oysters and other rare foods and wines hav ng been brought from New Orleans for such entertainments.

During the Confederate War, the Wade had buried various family treasures about the gardens and parks of this lively old place. After the rigors of war and Reconstruction were over, however, and the house had escaped destruction, the Wades were distressed to discover that the chest filled with jewels and other precious objects could not be located, as who ever had buried it could not remember the exact spot where all the chests had been concealed.

I believe I have noted elsewhere in my Diary that the houses is now occupied b negroes,--the rooms of the place being so large that a whole family may live,--and do--live in one. It is sadly in need of repair, and the silver doornobs which graced the great doors when we first visited the place last fall have disappeared, and I am afraid the whole place will fall out of sight through fire or through sheer neglect shortly. It seems a gre t pity.

We were so happy with interestin material we found that we read until the unheard hour of eight forty five, when I galloped home in the rain which had just started falling. Grandpa must have been hiding under the gallery, for he wasn't with me when I galloped all alone over to Lyles, where I looked at Dore illustrations of the Bible for a while, listening to the downpour outside, and so to sleep.

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June 25th - Tuesday.

Another perfect morning, save for one little cloud on the horizon in the form of a report Frank brought me with five o'clock coffee:--The Madam hadn't slept v ry well and was already up and moving about since sleep had forsaken her.

I hoped that after breakfast she might lie down again and possibly sleep for a little while, and so I didn't visit her, as I should have like to.

After last night's rain, everything was fresh and glistening in the morning sunshine. After breakfast, Grandpa followed me about the gardens as I gathered an armful of great Regal lilies and a huge basketful of giant magnolias whose alapastewhiteness against the dark luxuriance of their sleek waxey leaves brought back a memory of beauty and the fantastic as I arranged them in the great octoganal porcelaine soupiere, which somehow reminds one much less of a tureen than an ancient marble baptismal fount. Momentarily through my brain swept a whole group of kalaedesopic pictures of an old, old city in a French colony in North Africa. Once this ancient metropolis had theen the seat of Roman cohture, and magnificent buildings had dominated its thoroughfares. With the coming of the hristi n eara, however, many of these fine edifices had been metamorphosed into churches,--Greek architecture moulded into houses of worship and incorporating many of the fine columns, capitals and marbles of the pagan gods that had gone before. As the years had rolled on, the Saracens had come to change the customs of the country and the concepts of existance.

Mud house and curious nondescript barnacles had grown up around these ancient buildings of grandeur, so that with the onward march of the years many of them had become lots in a maze of passages, called thoroughfares, and hidden away from all but those who were initiated into their secrets.

Someone had confided the secrets of the famous baths of this ancient city and an all wise guide could lead the way. Through narrow winding alleys and crossing corners that bewildered the traveler with its multifarious cries of the merchant and donkey driver, through waves of humanity that at the same time stank of rancid odors and priceless perfumes, and on through an ominous and darkened courtyard, through an entrosale as dark as midnight, smack up against two great leather, nail studded doors. The trip though the slumps had been so circuitous that one couldn't have the vaguest notion where he might be. When the door swung open he was equally perplexed, for there before him circled a vast hall, resplendant in ancient marbles and pentellic friezes. Always a gorgeous building, this former Greecian temple and hristain church had been fashioned into a sumptuous public bath, and reclinig on marble couches about the walls, and half hident way in little chapels off the main floor, lolled naked figures of Saracen and negro, Saxons, French and Slav. Where once the space before the alter had kneeled those who partook of the sacrament, a great marble pool had been thasion, and into it ran streams of hot water from either dolphin spout at the extreme ends of the pool. A little in



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A little to the left and to the rear, a great octagonal marble fount dripped water from its shallow bassin, and what struck the eye most forcibly, was a sleek, Saracen youth, naked as a God, a scarlet turban on his head, a towel draped over his shoulder, adjusting a red slipper on on foot as he poised on the edge of the white marble fount.

And thus it was, I suppose, that my mind traveled backwards to another time and clime, as I arranged the great magnolias in the eight-sided soupiere and for a moment forgot about the relativity of space and time.

All morning I worked at my machine, having my coffee and butter milk alone, as Rita reported, when bringin my tray, that Aunt Cammie was busy with a seamstress.

Just before listening to the news broadcasts from Europe at 11:30, I inclined my ear toward a reading of Lawrence Hope's The Teakwood Forest from the Indian Love Lyrics. I like it.

Dinner at 12, and afterward some nice mail from New York, including copies of the first edition of the new publication, PM, a daily New York newspaper, which embraces some good ideas, I think, but which is unlikely to success if kept in its original character, I believe.

I had thought of going over to Felix Laurence's to have my hair cut, but Frank told me that Felix had gone to town with a number of other Melrose residents, to observe the doings in Court, for today Elmer's husband is being tried for murder.

About three Aunt Cammie came over to Lyle's house where I was writing. She wanted to chat a little about her gardens in anticipation of her three weeks absence at Hot Springs. She had scarcely arrived when Mrs. Weise, her daughter and a gentleman arrived fromatchitoches,--the man being a visitor

from Detroit. While the ladies chatted, I showed the man around Melrose, which, he said, reminded him so much of Henry Ford's Greenfield Village. He took many colored movies. Just as we joined Mrs. Weises and Aunt Cammie again, Sister blew in. She had piloted Mrs. Rand, her sister and a Mrs. Evans to Melrose.

Both Aunt Cammie and I appeared to have the same idea as to the advisability of getting the Weiss party out of Lyle's house to forestall the Rand group from getting in, and so we moved toward the door when Mrs. Evans, with a certain amount of social courage, it seemed to me, suddenly stuck her head in the door just as we were moving towards it. Resentations were made all the way around, and they we all left the house, and headed toward the big house. As we got to the garden gate at the end of Lyle's garden, however, I noticed that Mrs. Evans had remained behind, which somewhat annoyed me, as I had a lot of things scattered about which were more or less personal. And so I said goodbye the the Weiss group, and came back to find Mrs. Evans standing in the middle of the bed room apparently trying

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to get a good eye full. I explained that we were all heading toward the big house, where I presumed Aunt Cammie would like to talk with them from her sofa, as she was extremely exhausted and altogether ill. Reluctantly Mrs. Evans came out with me. Outside the big house, I said hello to Mrs. Rand and was introduced to her sister who was showing the group a hooked rug she had been working on. Somehow the Weisses got off, although I didn't see them go, and Mrs. Rand and her sister disappeared somewhere.--Pat said ~~xx~~ he thought they had gone to my house. I accordingly excused myself and went home, but finding no one decided it would be an excellent time to take off my long beard and bathe, which I did.

Half an hour later I found Mrs. Evans and Blythe's sister on the front gallery of the big house, and I know not where Blythe herself could have been. They said until nearly six o'clock, and then, after gathering some pots of flowers, they departed.

And so supper followed, after which Aunt Cammie and I read for a little while in her room.

J. H. came in about 7:45. I instinctively felt that he was extremely nervous, although his outward appearance and manner was the same usual calm. I had asked him ~~if~~ at dinner the trial of Elmer's husband had been concluded. He said it had terminated about five o'clock, and that he had dropped in near its conclusion, had gone out with the negro's lawyer, just before he did the summing up, as the court recessed for a few minutes which the lawyer utilized to hurry around the corner to get a couple of drinks. J. H. had gone with him, more to keep him in line than anything I suppose, as J. H. doesn't drink. J. H. said the bartender didn't want to see the lawyer a drink, not desiring his patronage, but that he had acquiesced. J. H. said the jury would probably hand down a verdict early in the evening, but no doubt would delay deliberations so that they could get a free dinner out of the State before returning to the Court.

And so when J. H. returned to the big house at 7:45 to kiss his mother goodnight, as is his custom, I asked him if the jury had come in. He said it had, and that the verdict was Life In Prison. He said this was causing a great to-do in town, all the canaille being greatly incensed, for, as J. H. explained it, in their estimation the sole question was: Can a nigger kill a white man and not be executed? Obviously J. H. felt that he would be severely criticised, since he said out of a clear sky: "There will be a plenty heard about this as time goes on. After all, I merely told the man's father and mother where they could find a lawyer at the time they came to ask me what they should do." In a way I wished I hadn't heard this, for even though the lawyer he had secured for them wasn't all that could be desired, still it did show an effort on J. H.'s part to accord some consideration for the culprit,



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And so with Almer's man going to jail for life, I suppose he and his family feel that they have been particularly blessed, in the murderer thus escaping the death penalty, and no doubt the local colored people will feel even more firmly than ever that they have a protector in J. H. and his influence in town when times of trouble strike them.

On the other side of the picture, I suppose that certain elements in the Parish will have a certain resentment for J. H., feeling that it was he who saved the negroe's neck, and I suppose it is this resentment that J. H. doesn't relish.

Eight o'clock, and so goodnight to Aunt Cammie, and so over to Mel's alone, since I couldn't find Grandpa waiting for me.

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June 26th - Wednesday.

Another beautiful morning with a tremendous dew as I discovered as I went from Lyle's house where I had slept over to my house.

After gathering some fresh bouquets, I got to work on the mail and then concentrated on some other notes on my typewriter until nine-thirty when Aunt Cammie came over to see me back in Lyle's house. She hadn't slept very well, but Mary arrived shortly afterward with coffee, and a small cup of it helped out a little. Just as we were finishing, Frank arrived with the incoming mail. There were nice letters from Miss Louise, Macgruder Drake, Mary Ambdin in the Mississippi section, and several from Manhattan,--all of which pleased me much.

Pat ran in shortly afterward with two letters which she had received, and there followed a considerable discussion on the mere courtesy of answering letters. I came to the conclusion that letter writing always was a lost art and that cultivated people can go hay-wire more easily on the matter of correspondence without seeming to realize it than on any other point of accept social procedure if, indeed, anyone would admit that the receipt of a pleasant personal communication calls for a response.

Dinner and Pister and her husband blew in afterward and eventually picked up Pat and took him home with them to stay while Aunt Cammie is in Hot Springs.

I worked at my machine until three when Frank came to announce that the Madam wanted me to have lemonade with her and that ice cream had just arrived, too, so I joined the Lady in her room. Charles arrived just as we were finishing, and as he had left his wife home on Little River, I thought he might enjoy a tete-a-tete with Aunt Cammie, since I wouldn't be needed to keep the conversation stepped up. I accordingly went over across the River to have Felix Laurenz cut my hair. I found his old father sitting on the front gallery, and together we hunted up Felix who was hoeing in the back cotton patch behind the church. Felix relinquished his attack on the weeds to lay hold on my perruque, and together we returned to his front gallery. While I was waiting for him to get his scissors, I looked at the little garden before the house and found it as charming as ever. I was enchanted when back on the gallery to notice the lovely climbing roses that were climbing across the upper front of the gallery, and to notice a nice snowy tooth brush hanging on a little wire beside a beautifully blown red rose.

Back home for supper, and afterwards Aunt Cammie and I started for Dr. Miller's cabin to close the windows in anticipation of Aunt Cammie's leaving on the morrow. Celeste joined up in our little journey, and as we were coming out of the cabin, we were



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to see Elmer ~~coming~~ mounting the old millstone that forms the step to the little gallery of the cabin. We all sat down on the gallery, and Aunt Cammie asked Elmer to sit down too. Elmer said she had just heard the Madam wasn't so well and must go away for a spell, and that she wanted to come and wish her goodbye.

Obviously she had dressed in her best to pay the visit and Aunt Cammie, as were we all, was touched by her kindness. Naturally we all were dying to hear Elmer's reaction to her husband's fate in yesterday's court. She said she was glad for him and for his folks. When she had been up to jail to see him some weeks back she said she had told him she was "plumb" glad to see him so happy,-- "looked lik he sure liked it there,--playing cards and all". He said he didn't mind it there, and he told her he was sure glad she had got another man.

She told us she could sure get alling if she lived at Melrose, but she wished Mr. J. H. would let her hoe cotton some more. Last week it was too wet for the ladies to hoe and this week they all hoed so bad, he wouldn't let any of 'em hoe at all. She said all the other ladies skied the weeds too much whenever their was a tree at the end of the patch, "cause it looked like each one was hurryin' so fast to make that shade, they jus' didn't pay no mind to how

that cotton war hoed". She giggled in telling these details, and seemed generally gay, even about her temporary respite from hoeing, since she said she could sure make out plumb good, and when you don't have nuthin' else you can al'ays go over to the river and catch a whole mess of fish".

A little more chat, and Elmer went on her way. Cel ste said good night and Aunt Cammie and I went to her room where we hoped to get some last minute reading done. Just before sitting down, however, Henry arrived from court where he had been all day. He was finished with his testimony on the other trial yesterday, but he liked his visit to court, and so just went today on general principles. He had been drinking heavily, and Aunt Cammie told him he shouldn't. He said he "knewed it", but - "all them layers, you know". The Madam didn't but that was alright. I noticed by the clock that J. H. would arrive at any moment, and so I did my best to shoe Henry out, since J. H. wouldn't have been too pleased to find him there in that condition. "Fortunately I got Henry down stairs about a minute before J. H. arrived, and I flew upstairs again, lighted a cigarette quick, and blew smoke madly to kill the terrific smell of whiskey that still floated on the air.

With J. H.'s arrival, we all chatted until a little after eith when I said goodnight to all and went my way.

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June 27th - Thursday.

It was summer all night long, and although I slept well, I was impressed by the heat whenever I chance to awaken.

Frank arrived a little earlier than usual, and ~~we~~ we clipped off our usual conversation at dawning, as he will have extra things to do in getting little odds and ends taken care of for Aunt Cammie before she leaves at 6:30.

I had expected to spend my entire morning at my machine, but Frank had brought me a message from J. H. and Aunt Cammie, asking me if I wouldn't care to ride to Shreveport with them. I did, and so stepped up my routine a little.

Mary, the cook, had failed to arrive as early as she might have, and so Frank, beside attending to all his several other duties served Aunt Cammie and me our breakfasts after preparing it with his own hand.

I called for Aunt Cammie at 6:25, and regret to find her looking rather tired, and I learned that she hadn't slept very well. By 6:30 we had joined J. H. and were headed toward Shreveport a hundred miles away.

The journey was rather prosaic, save for the extraordinary heat and the surprisingly poor showing cotton was making in the Caddaux area.

Robina was all set, and after chatting for a few moments with her, J. H. and I handed over Aunt Cammie to Robina who will go with her for a while at Hot Springs. There were a lot of things I wanted to say to Robina, but somehow circumstances ganged up on us so we didn't get anywhere.

After saying goodbye, we dropped by the Commercial Bank Building to meet Miss Fish,--at least, I was supposed to meet her, for J. H. was already acquainted with her, and I believe had spoken with her that morning. I had heard so much of Robina's partner, that I already had a preconceived notion of what she would be like. "He was entirely different.

And so back into the car, and headed toward Melrose. It was the longest couple of hours J. H. had ever spent, I reckon, since he usually doesn't have to engage in lengthy conversations except under unusual circumstances, such as these, which really weren't extraordinary, except that for the first time in our lives we were thus placed side by side for such a period.

Conversation got around to the part he played in Victorin's ~~trial~~ trial,--for Elmer's husband's luck in escaping the gallows is still the big subject of conversation in "atchitoches Parish. I remarked that his stock must have automatically soared with the people of color. He agreed but added immediately that it had sunk pretty low with the whites. And then he added something that interested me mightily. He said that it wouldn't be at all surprising if Victorin's troubles might yet be terminated without having to spend any time in Angola. It seems that once before two men against whom public sentiment had run high had escaped the death penalty, but that when they were being



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being transferred from jail to prison, being escorted by two deputies, both had "tried to escape", and that each deputy had accordingly killed one of the prisoners, so that later neither deputy could make any observations regarding the other.

He said, of course, that no one could tell what might happen, but he foresaw the possibility that Victorin might "try to escape",-- either before he reaches Angola or even afterward.

We were back to Melrose before dinner, and I had a chance to bath before eating, and I was glad of the opportunity, for I was all adrip in spite of the breeze that the car created at 70 miles an hour.

Dinner was exceedingly dull, and particularly because of the vacant chair.

At three o'clock, Frank came over to Lyle's house where I was working with a tray of lemonade. "The place sure ain't nuthin' without the 'adam' he remarked as he eyes traveled toward no particular point over the white garden.

"The 'adam, she sure could tell this mornin' I couldn't look her plumb in the face. She sure knowed I'd cried if I had." Little wonder we love Frank.

Until five thirty I kept my typewriter going, then shaved and bathed and had supper.

Afterward, I rounded up all the animals for their suppers,-- all but one, for I couldn't find little Grandpa Junior.

Before he left for home, Frank came to my house to tell me he had made the rounds of the big house and that everything was in order, and that he would be glad to sleep on the spot if I wanted him too. Of course I told him that he must go home to his family, for I knew there was a good fish dinner waiting for him, for I had seen his wife fishing near the bridge earlier in the day, and if his wife goes fishing, the fishes bite,--illustrating a certain charm which I could never exert on them.

And so a little before eight Frank said goodnight, and I sat for a while listening to the Republican convention in Philadelphia which was trying to select Wendell Wilkie as the Party standard-bearer.

A little after eight, I walked down to the saloon to get some ice cream. As I stood on the little gallery, waiting for Bill to finish his game of 21, I noticed a familiar figure step out of the shadows toward the saloon. It was McKinley, dressed in dark trousers, a crumpled hued sweater,-- an uncertain green suggesting that weird tone that a black alpaca coat will take on when it has been worn too long. It didn't become McKinley peculiar type of negro beauty. On his head he was wearing a cap that reminded me of the one the milk delivers in New York wear. Altogether, he looked exactly like a lightly inflated turtle. We exchanged greetings, and said he was surprised to see me so far from home at such an hour. I gather that my ice cream propensities hadn't traveled up and down Cane River as much as one might have expected. I was home before nine, sharing my

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June 28th - Friday.

It was good to awaken at four thirty, to hear Heintzie, who had staid with me and Grandp, snoring gently on his pillow in the corner, and as I awaited the sound of Frank at the gate to this little garden, try to blend into one vast harmony all the varied sound of the swelling chorus of birds that find a paradise in the thousands of flowering trees and shrubs in the Melrose gardens. It seems to me that the black birds always get an edge on the other songsters, but they are always followed almost immediately by scores of other types and varieties. It is strange, but I don't recall I don't recall ever having heard those nasty feathered gangsters,-- the Blue-Jays,--at dawning. Heaven knows that later in the day their racket is enough to drown out plenty of good songsters, but somehow sunrise is one of the purer parts of the day, and so possibly God guaranteed it by making the Jays wake up late.

As Frank was pouring my second cup of coffee, the gray clouds which had been forming since daybreak began dissolving in rain. Before I had left Lyle's house and started for mine, it was raining. For a couple of hours the thunder rolled that the floods descended. I was especially sorry because I had promised Celeste a big bouquet of dahlias yesterday, but of course hadn't been able to deliver, since I had unexpectedly decided to run up to Hrevoport. And of course I could gather any on my return, since flowers gathered in the full sun in this locality are done for almost before they are placed in water.

But after I had done a little mail, the rain ceased, and so armed with a generous size basket and some sharp shears, I began on the dahlias. After I had cut the fourth one, I snipped off the end

of my finger, and so had to have it bandaged before continuing my work, since because of the excessive bleeding, the flowers would have been covered with gore. Just as I was to start out anew, Sister blew in. She looked at my four dahlias, and said she was going to pick flowers for herself. I looked heavenward, and reconciled myself to the thought that Celeste would have to forego her bouquet again.

Celeste dropped in at about this moment, and so saw Sister tear through the dahlias like a tornado. Seeing the evidence of my good intentions, in the form of the first four flowers, she smiled with me as we saw sister piling up her bounty in three or four different cardboard cartons.

I had to see Henry, who is making a large loom for Mary Lambdin, and so I said goodbye to Celeste and Sister, and I didn't get back to the house until Sister had left. In all the excitement of carrying out her several boxes of vegetables, furniture and flowers, she had inadvertently overlooked one box. It contained all the big prize dahlias which she had cut. I found much pleasure in adding the four I had originally cut, and presenting the rather stunning collection to Celeste. We had a highball and the mail before I returned to the big house for dinner.



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I was busy at my typewriter about 2 o'clock when Sam Brown blew in, looking for the dachhund who was scheduled for a bath. It was the first time I had seen Sam since he had appeared as a witness in town on a murder trial on Wednesday. He had gone up on Tuesday however, to listen to Victorin's trial, as had plenty of colored people from this locality. Sam said he had gone because it gave him a chance to put on his "studyin cap" and see how things were done so be would be more acquainted with procedure on the morrow. These, of course, were not Sam's exact words, and the pity of it is that I cannot remember how he ~~it~~ did pour them out, for the description of the doings both of Victorin's trial and of Son-gun's was undoubtedly the best monologue I have ever heard.

Son-gun had slit a man's throat 19 years ago, at a party back on Little River. Sam was among those youths present on that historic occasion, and remembered everything, he said. At the trial, it appeared that Son-gun's memory hadn't been so good as Sam's, and there was considerable confusion as to how the man of color had been killed. Son-gun swore the man had been shot, but everyone else swore his throat had been cut from ear to ear. Son-gun said he had had a razor with him,--but that he had slipped it in his pocket when he went to the party because he was going to shave after he got there, etc., etc. Suffice it is to say, that SonOgun had disappeared after the murder, had gone to New Orleans, married and was in some sort of business for himself until, after 19 years the law caught up with him. He was convicted and sentenced to from one to twenty years.

But Sam's recital of all the doings of his big day in Court broke off when Frank arrived with lemonade. We chatted a few moments, primarily about what Miss Robina and the Madam might be doing and how empty Melrose seemed without the Madam. At three, I walked over to Zelines, and found her mending on the front gallery of her little cabin. Joe was there too, some woman, rather youghish, whom I had never seen, and the usual collection of little boys who always seem fascinated by Zeline's endless stories. Edward was inside dressing, and he came to the door to say Hello. It always impresses me how spick and span Edward always looks when dressed, for somehow it is difficult to think of beautifully pressed suits and faultlessly ironed linens issuing from Zeline's little dirt-floored cabin.

Back home for supper, chatting as I crossed the bridge on the way back with May, Frank's second daughter, who cannot be more than 16 or 17 but seems much older, and very attractive, and I talked at Frank's youngest boy, Frank, Jr. who is about 7 and quite uncommunicative. He is so light in color and his hair is so blind, I cannot help thinking what difficulties life is going to present for him when he grows older and possibly lives elsewhere than on Cane River.

After supper, Frank came and chatted with me for half an hour, assuring me that everything was in condition, so that if it should rain again, I wouldn't have to worry.

At eight thirty I listened to a Windsor programme which lasted rather longer than I had anticipated, and so eventually to bed

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June 29th or 30th - Saturday.

A sky overcast with rain clouds but as yet no rain.

Frank was a little earlier than usual, and Grandpa and I accordingly breakfasted sooner than we usually do.

Before seven, after writing a couple letters, I was in the big road, covering a goodly number of miles before eleven when I turned off the steaming cement pavement and headed up the lane towards home. My shirt was soaking and perspiration ran down my face. Almost home, and I notice a patch of sunshine course across the pasture, and a few minutes later a gentle rain began falling, bringing coolness and refreshment with it. I stopped for a moment at the saloon for a beer, and so arrived home before eleven thirty.

Dinner was a 50 - 50 proposition, with the food excellent and the board rather dull. A vacant chair at the head of the table was eloquent evidence of Melrose without a soul.

I picked up the mail at the store, hesitating on the gallery for a few moments to talk with J. H. about the current world turmoil and certain personalities on on the big stage. He mentioned that William C. Bullitt, the American Ambassador to France had quitted Paris for London. It recalled to my mind the last time I had seen Mrs. Bullitt, the former Louise Bryant, in Paris, some four or five years ago.

Once she had been married to some American poet, it seems to me from Washington or Oregon, who later had gone to Russia sometime after the Bolshevic Revolution in 1917, had written verse there in praise of that regime, and eventually had died in the Russian capitol and had been buried along side other Russian heroes in the Kremlin Wall.

I believe he and Louise had been divorced before his death although I am not certain. In any event she married young Bullitt, and forever hounded him about the greatness of her first husband and what a hero he was for the Russians. She always claimed that this is what spurred Bullitt on to be the first American Ambassador to Bolshevi Russia.

Louise always declared that Bullitt was inordinately surprised and delighted when he actually became a father. But I always felt that Louise was not one who could stand prosperity, and she eventually sought her freedom from the bonds of matrimony, relinquishing the daughter to Bullitt. When last I saw her in Paris, there was an unpleasant undercurrent with her in the City and her husband slated for the Ambassadorial post to France. Louise was much too Bohemian to avoid situations which were bound to filter through news agencies and gossips to give the Ambassador anything but a head ache. I recall being with some friends at the theatre, and somehow Louise became attached to the group. Later that evening, we all stopped for a coffee at a sidewalk cafe in the heart of Paris, Louise strikingly gowned in white taffeta with a little ballero evening jacket. It was a typical evening on the boulevards,



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elegantly dressed people of all nationalities sitting a little tables watching the world go by on the pavements before. A pretty little flower girls moved slowly up and down before the tables, furtively offering a tiny boutonniere to one table and another but making her gesture so furtively and with such a frightened expression that the gay peoples at the table took little or no notice of her, perhaps more through kindness in trying to increase her uncertainty than in actually trying to avoid her.

This was just the kind of a setting Louise loved. She called the girl to her, and frankly told her that her method of approach was entirely wrong if she really had in mind to sell her flowers. The girl said she really did want to sell them as she needed the money badly. Thereupon Louise volunteered to show her how salesmanship should be practiced under the circumstances. Telling the girl to sit down in her chair, she slipped the little rope attached to the basket over her own shoulder, and moved down from table to table along the sidewalk, a striking figure in a gorgeous costume and on such an unexpected mission. It caught the imagination of the patrons, and every table vied for a flower. Once some prospective purchaser asked the price, to which Louise responded that whatever banknote he gave for it, the flower would be worth twice as much. Before she was at the end of the tables, the poor little wicker basket was empty of faded blossoms, but piled high with gayly engraved bank notes. Returning to the table she took the little girl by the hand, whispered something in her ear, and together before the assembled merry-makers, they bowed in deep courtesy.

Louise then slipped off the rope from around her own shoulder, and draped it around the astonished flower girl, who hurriedly disappeared down the boulevard, clasping her panier of bank notes, probably too stunned to realize how kindly Dame Fortune had smiled on her on a gas lighted street in Paris at midnight.

That little episode was nothing in the life of Louise Bryant, who had no doubt forgotten it within the next five minutes, but it also illustrated why it wouldn't be easy for the protocol to have her overstepping the usual bounds of decorum in a capitol where her former husband was Ambassador, and in view of this I presume there was a certain sigh of relief when a few months later, Louise died in her tiny apartment on the Left Bank.

Back to my typewriter, I worked all afternoon, with only a few moments breathing spell when Frank came with lemonade.

We had supper at 5:30, and afterwards I rounded up my several animals for their nightly feed, and a little later, Grandpa and I had some ice cream. I looked at Gustave Dore illustrations until eight and so to bed.

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[6-30-40]

June 31st - Sunday.

I slept the sleep of the just last night, awakening at four twenty as the birds began announcing the approach of a dawn that was as yet scarcely visible, because of the heavy cloud curtains that still drape the sky.

I fell fast asleep again, awakening only when I heard Frank at my bedside saying something to Grandpa, asleep at my feet.

The coffee never tasted better nor did the cigarettes, as Frank and I speculated on what Aunt Cammie and Robina were up to this first Sunday they are away. It was 5:30 before Frank ran along to look after his other early morning duties, and I was glad it was Sunday in giving us this leisure to get the day under way.

Before Six, I had shaved and bathed and was sitting down to breakfast in my house. It's a pleasant musical programme they have for an hour before a bunch of crack-pot preachers get to going full blast in the neighborhood of seven or eight o'clock. It is unbelievable that all the services at that hour are dominated by a bunch of Bible-slapping dumb-bells and that not an intelligent theologian appears on the air before eleven or twelve o'clock.

One with breakfast, I rounded up a couple of baskets of flowers, primarily dahlias and zinnias, all of which I turned over to one of the servants who was giving a party in the afternoon and had asked if she might have one or two of those nice big posies.

There were four for dinner and conversation was more in line with a Quaker prayer meeting than anything else I could think of, and the spirit didn't seem to move anyone much, although I did hear some rather curious ideas on how the capitalists could solve the unemployment problem if only Wilke might be elected.

I worked at my desk until about five when sister blew in with her husband, the latter carrying the baby. At his wife's direction the Dr. took off the baby's diapers which sister said were wet. The baby was parked on the floor in front of the door. He immediately responded to a cosmic urge without the aid and comfort of his diapers.

Pat came bouncing in shortly afterward. He was so full of life he forgot to speak. Harry followed in his footsteps. He hesitated at the door, saying: "Good evening, Mr. Francois." Pat is such a sweet child, I hope they don't let his manners slip.

Sister said she was mad because Celeste was going through her mother's things upstairs when she blew in on Friday. I told her the Celeste was upstairs because she had accompanied me to help fix up my finger I had cut and that we had been raiding the bandage and iodine department in the bath room, but sister said she knew it was otherwise.



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[6-30-40]

July 31st - Sunday - page 2.

Sister said there was cold fried chicken in the ice box, and so they thought they would stay for supper. They did. Dan joined the group. Conversation didn't sparkle.

By five thirty they were gone again, and Frank took care of the dishes so Mary wouldn't have them to attend to in the morning. Frank's wife had arrived, asking him if he could go to the "church house" this evening, and so I sent him on his way.

The animals next got their Sunday night supper, and so all of them except Monstorsity, who hadn't shown up, went with me over to Lyle's, where I worked at my desk until eight o'clock when I took some quinine and folded up my beard.

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July 1st- Monday. [1940]

Cloudy, with the weather still undecided whether to rain or not.

Frank arrived at five, letting Grandpa, who had been on the gallery since two o'clock, in with him.

I feel so closely in harmony with Frank that his happiness always communicates itself to me by the mere tonal quality of his "Good morning". This morning that same sensitivity operated as usual, but the note was different, for I instinctively felt a ~~vibr~~ ~~at~~ vibration of an absence of happiness in his voice. I asked him how he was feeling, and thus thrown on his guard, he made an effort to regain his usual gaiety. I let the matter go, knowing that the time was not yet arrived for the lock which kept his distress vaulted up, to unlock automatically. It seems to me unkind to pry and hammer away at a time-lock unnecessarily when one stops to realize that the great doors of the soul will open of their own accord when the proper minute arrives. At coffee time I asked him how he was feeling and at lemonade time I inquired if all was going well, but that and nothing more. In his heart he realizes that I sense something is troubling him, and both of us tacitly recognize the fact that sooner or later we shall share the problem together.

I got out quite a stack of mail before eight, and had made a little tour of the house and the little houses before nine. I found Henry working like mad on the larger loom for Mary Lambdin, and proud as a peacock of the finished workmanship he was bestowing on the creation.

Ten o'clock and Frank brought me the mail where I was working in Lyle's house. There were two letters from Robina, bringing good news of the two ladies in Hot Springs. Frank lingered to hear to good news and seemed as happy as a clam that things were going along nicely. It was heartening to notice how the joy restored the wavering note in his voice and manner for the moment.

Dinner at noon, and afterward Celeste dropped by for coffee with me. She read a grand letter I had just received regarding much Foster business and the Prince of Jallon.

I worked at my machine all afternoon until four, when I did a little gardening until Celeste arrived with a staff photographer from Washington, D. C., who had been sent up from New Orleans to round out the collection of photographs of historic edifices here. We mapped out subjects until nearly six, when the photographer departed, with the promise to be back again to make the pictures within a day or two.

Supper with only three of us, and notable primarily for its



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July 1st - Monday - page 2.

absence of conversation.

There was something about it that made me smile inwardly, however, for it recalled an episode that had happened some years back in New York when I had displayed too much consideration or a fellow diner had shown too little. As a youth, I had always believed that it was poor taste to read a newspaper which at table, even though one might be alone. Of course such a thing would be hopelessly ~~xx~~ rude if someone were occupying a place at the table with one.

I recall that I had been in New York only a few days, after spending sometime in Paris, and that I was trying to get caught up on my newspapers which had piled up during the days I had been at sea. On that particular day, I went to lunch very late, long after most of the tables had been emptied of the noon-tide hordes. The restaurant was on the corner of Fifth Avenue at 45th Street, and being a cafeteria, I could readily choose a vacant table and eat and read in peace. I recall that I was fascinated by the article I was reading and was therefore loath indeed to relinquish my perusal of it when a gentleman sat down opposite me. But my experience had been slight in the laissez-faire manners of Manhattan, and feeling quite noble in doing so, I folded up the newspaper and laid it aside until the man with the pie and coffee should be done and away.

To my surprise, as I laid my Times aside, my unknown companion suddenly reached over and as he picked it up from beside my plate, remarked: "I see you're not reading this any more, so I will".

There was no reading material at supper, but things were rather like that.

I had a full collection of animals for supper when I myself had finished, and when they had eaten, they all followed me over to Lyle's where they had great sport tumbling over each other on the soft green grass, with Grandpa Jr., adding to the gymnastics by suddenly running up the pillars on the gallery, turning around to see if he had an audience when up about as far as he could go, then meow-ing loudly, and then backing down again.

I went to bed before eight, and for half an hour watched the momentary pink flashes of thunder as the illuminated the great thunderheads that seemed bogged down in the north. And so to sleep.

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July 2nd - Tuesday.

Old Saint Swithin is certainly working over time. It was raining when I awoke about two o'clock to let Grandpa in, and it pured again about four o'clock.

But when Frank arrived, there seemed to be some promise of blue sky, although there still was a sheer coating of haze over head.

I worked all morning at my machine, halting only long enough to go to the store with the mail, and a little later to have coffee at ten. Mary brought it and told me how she was praying that she might not get too nervous to read her piece on Sunday at the Alam Brown funeral services. I must certainly make it a point to attend. She told me how lonely she was now that her 18 year old daughter had died, and that she should so much like to go back to Mobile, Alabama where her mother lived. She explained that this country wasn't her home place, and when I asked her how she happened to come here in the first place, she confided that her old man--"my husband, him, he's 20 years older than me, and him he al'as followed turpentine, through Caroline, Georgia, Mississippi,--I once lived at Lorman,--him, he followed turpentine, and so I jus' followed".

I gathered that her husband, the Reverend Sauerwell, must have had experience in the turpentine business, but the newness of "following turpentine" was something I hadn't heard before.

Dinner and afterwards at my machine, until Frank arrived with a lemonade, when it began pouring again. Back to my machine again, and a little later the sun was out. Shortly afterward, I heard a great clatter at my gate, and as it kept up indefinitely, I concluded it wasn't Sam Brown putting vines from it, as I had first supposed, and so I went out to satisfy my curiosity. It was no less than two score youths and maidens. I said: "How do you do?" to which they replied: "How do you do." In a few moments, Mr. Kaiser of the Normal school in town, came up. He explained that he was showing one of his classes the sights of Celrose, and he knew Mrs. Henry wouldn't mind if he took them through Mr. Paxon's house. I told him that he was possibly correct in his assumption but as Mrs. Henry wasn't here, I would be glad if he would deny his pilgrims the pleasure this once, since it was my understanding that the houses,--at least the interiors we kept inviolate.

At supper I gained an inkling into what has been depressing Frank. J. H. and I talked politics gayly, but no one else joined in the conversation, save Dan who referred to Frank as that god damned nigger, leading me to believe that Frank has probably already sense the resentment felt towards him.



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I had quite a time getting all my animals out of each others hair when it was time for their supper, but eventually they all had a share.

Wister and her husband blew in for a moment at 7:30, but staid only twenty minutes.

At eight o'clock, I waled over to the saloon where I found everyone listening to a broadcast of a prize-fight, but I didn't linger because I wanted to get home with my ice cream before the rain, which continuous lightning flashes heard, should start coming down.

I made it just in time, and so sat and looked at the July issue of House and Garden, with lovely full page color plates of interiors of The White House, Mount Vernon and Arlington.

From the pictures, I gathered that Arlington is now completely furnished, but I recalled that the last time I visited the place there was no furniture, save a bedroom suite, which was called the Lafayette suite. The bed was massive, with the whole headboard of carved mahogany, an eagles head in the center, and the wings spreading to right and left to the extreme ends, with almost every feather detailed in the carving.

A little after nine it was bed time, so I let in Grandpa who had been on the gallery, and so went to sleep.

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July 3rd - Wednesday.

Just for a change, it was raining when I awoke this morning.

A little before I was done with breakfast, however, the rain had stopped, but it gave no promise of clearing up.

I worked until ten, when Celeste came over to say she had just been talking with Beth Williams who suggested that we run up to her house,--St. Charles Plantation,--on Monday to call on an old man who ~~xx~~ knew everything about the times and the people of this locality for ever so far back. But she said we should play down the questions on Jean Rudhomme, but said she couldn't explain why on the telephone. I think I know why, and I am ~~x~~ ~~x~~ leaping to see how she handles it. After all, Jean Rudhomme was thriving in the 1850s, and I should imagine that in 90 years, times might have given a coating to any subject that make anything not too difficult to manage.

There was nice mail,--Robina and Aunt Mammie, included as well as post from New York and from Atlanta whence Mrs. Brandon was writing to say she had poise in her tree just long enough to fly on to Maryland.

Dinner, with vast silences, and so over to Lyle's where Celeste joined me for a little chat. Wister blew in for half an hour, read the letters she had received from her mother, held an animated chat with her husband who was quarter of a mile away, and so flew on. Celeste left too.

The rest of the afternoon I spent at my desk, with a quick shower before supper, and so back to my desk until a little after eight.

Before closing this Journal for today, however, I must remark upon a new word I sat up and took notice of when one of my colored friends used it while talking with me today. He was describing someone's appearance, saying that the white girl had something which I couldn't understand on her face. I asked again what he had said, and he replied: "you knows, she has them little spots on her face, you know what they calls 'em, little frinkles". I liked it very much.

There were some other oddities I should like to report at this time, too, but I guess I shall have to let them go and get on with some mail before I go to bed.

BTF



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July 4th - Thursday.

Another grayish dawn and sprinkling when I awoke a little after four.

By the time I had finished breakfast, however, the rain had ceased but it was obvious that it wouldn't clear up. A chill wind blew out of the east and I began thinking about a sweater.

I amx made a little tour of the gardens, gathered a nice big bunch of magnolias, and wrote a couple of letters before the post man came.

Henry was repairing the rose trellis in front of the gallery of my house and clipping back some of the longer shoots that were half way up the roof. He also tied back the great sprawling crepe-myrtles on either side of the gallery, and asked me if I thought the Madam wouldn't be plumb proud of how it looked. I thought so.

Ten o'clock and after having coffee with Celeste at her house, we drove over to call on Madam Aubert-Roque and Zeline, taking with us a package Frank had prepared, as the Madam always has him do,--sugar, coffee, grits and heaven knows what all.

We had a riotous time at Madame Aubert's, for neither Celeste's voice nor mine carries, and both of us would take a try at some casual remark, shouting alternately in poor Madame's ear, but accomplishing very little by way of getting out words across.

Coming back along the river road, we stopped off for a few moments to chat with Celine and Joe who received us as kindly as always on their little front gallery. Zeline wasn't well either, but somehow one seemed interested in her strange ailments while with Madame's Aubert's, one didn't seem to "pay them much mind", which goes to prove that a smile is a lot more convincing than a whine.

Back home at 11:30, and twenty minutes of news before dinner,-- primarily concerning the huge naval battle off Oran, in which the British seem to have put the French fleet out of commission, in order that it might not be surrendered to the Germans. How topsy-turvy the whole international situation seems. Unquestionably the English and Germans are to settle a few things, but I wonder how long it will take, and if any settlement can be permanent in such a small area as Europe where wholly dissimilar ideologies flourish so with abandon on opposite sides of intimate boundaries.

I tried to take a little nap after dinner, but for a dull headache of the fast day or two made work at my machine seem rather impossible. But my attempt at a little shut-eye went glimmering when J. H. stormed Myle's house where I was resting, followed by a flock of pilgrims. He seemed enchanted to find me as an aid in giving particulars regarding the historic aspects of the place.

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July 4th - Thursday - page 2.

We did all the houses, and when stepping into my house, several people exclaimed over the beauty of the doors. I must say that in that light they were grand, but J. H. never even saw them, and later asked me what those people were talking about.

A little after three, with the pilgrims well out of the place, I decided a little walk might do me good, and I thought of ice cream as a cure-all for headache. I saw Frank on horseback as I walked to the bridge. He told me lots of things about the horse he was riding, of which he is very proud, and I must say it is a good looking animal.

Back home, I worked until five, when I had a shave and shower and so to supper. We were three, Dan having gone to town.

About six thirty, my several little wards being fed, I decided to lie down, as I still didn't feel too well, and so I undressed and went to bed. Before going home, Frank dropped by the house, about seven, I reckon, and chatted with me for three-quarters of an hour, primarily wondering how the Madam and Miss Robina were getting on, what they were doing and when they would be leaving Hot Springs.

When he said goodnight, I had smoked a couple cigarettes and was enchanted to find my headache had evaporated, so I arose, dressed and began writing letters. I had put on my slippers but soon decided to change to my high top shoes, the mosquitoes were nibbling so madly under the desk.

I went to bed about 9:30 but after sleeping half an hour, awoke, drank a coca-cola, and then went back to sleep. BTM



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July 5th - Friday.

An overcast sky, but, for a wonder, no rain when I awoke a little after four. It had been extremely damp inside, however, and the morning breeze might bring a little ozone with it,--it it came,--which it didn't.

I was done with breakfast before seven and out in the big road which didn't seem as sticky as I thought it might after so much rain.

Below the gray curtain of clouds, little fleecy feather-beds floated about like ghostly Zeppelins, coursing through tree-tops and over and about the solitary barn on the Montrose road, like objects of gauze like construction. Occasionally the mist dropped down particles of rain, only to float away again, to be followed by other lost squadrons of this ethereal ~~arg~~ argosy.

Before I had gone far I had learned much of fourth of July celebrations and of a certain performance of The Battered Bride which sounded pretty else to home.

About ten, Nell Glass passed me in her car, headed toward Melrose, and so I accepted her invitation to ride, and so was home for a late cup of coffee. Both Lyle's house and mine had been sprayed for mosquitos during my absence, for I had met Frank on horseback as I started out, and he had galloped home immediately to get this work over and done with while I was in the big road.

Dinner and Dan didn't come down, so there were but two of us,--Eugene and I. Conversation was gay, and we talked of a hundred and one subject of Melrose concern except the one which we both gave an enormous berth.

~~xx~~ Celeste came over to my house a little after one o'clock bringing a girl-friend with her. We chatted for a while, during which ~~which~~ Celeste mentioned that she had made an appointment for us on Monday morning with Beth Williams Cloutier to go and call on some ancient citizen of the parish who knows everything, and as this is the second we have had in a couple of days, it would appear that our appreciation of Cane River's historic background ought to be on the up and up shortly.

I worked the rest of the afternoon at my desk until the supper bell rang. Supper itself was gay in conversation, with three of us gracing the board, J.H., Eugene and I. Dan didn't come down.

Sam Brown, in accordance with explicit instructions from on high, served whatever trays and liquids went upstairs.

Full as is this report of a dull day, a truer picture would be caught if one were to record the vast swirl of effervescence that flowed through it. After Sam Brown's first trip, he whispered to the cook. I came in the kitchen about that time from my house where I had been working after my return from my walk.

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July 5th - Friday,-- page 2.

Sister came shortly afterward, and after issuing the customary amount of orders, she galloped over to my house to impart the news which she had picked up in the kitchen and to ask if I didn't think she should go up stairs. I thought not. Didn't I think she should have her husband come down to Melrose this afternoon to look the situation over. I thought not. At least she thought she ought to consult J. H.,--what did I think? I thought that was better than the other two questions,--if there had to be an invasion of personal matters.

By noon the kitchen buzzed. All afternoon it buzzed. But there were two people on Melrose who asked no questions. We never shall ask any questions. We don't have to ask them. After all, it is obvious that one finds more than fresh air while taking a constitutional.



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July 6th - Saturday.

Four o'clock and Grandpa knocking at the screen door because he was cold, I suppose, since it was rainy and windy outside. He curled up on my feet and both of us, a little warmer, went back to sleep until Frank arrived at five.

Grandpa and Meinzie slithered through the rain with me over to my house where we found Monstrosity and Grandpa, Jr., waiting for us on the gallery. After breakfast, all four skipped back to Lyle's house with me where on the pavement of the front gallery they did their Saturday morning bathing while, inside, I labored on correspondence.

Celeste had sent May over asking me to have a highball with her and her girl friend before dinner, which took me over to her house at eleven. We also ran through a little mail, with Payne, who had just dropped in, glancing over Celeste's shoulder as she read, to emphasize the personal nature of the correspondence.

Dinner for two at the big house, with Payne sitting in, and afterward a little conference with Frank to help out a Gordian knot, developed by Sam Brown's absence from easy access to the big house this Saturday afternoon.

J. H. shortly sent Mat to my house, asking me to join him and Miss Post at Lyle's.

We chatted for a few moments together and then Miss Post, who is with the Agriculture Department of Washington, D. C., invited me to ride about Cane River a bit to point out the places I had recommended for her to photograph for the Federal files.

We did the graveyard at the Melrose Church, and then headed for Celines, but found the roads impassable. We accordingly ran up to Bermuda, a vote Joyeuse, on the east bank of Cane River, and so back to Melrose, and thence down to Hertzogs, to look over the old houses and farm buildings along that road.

At the Hertzog store we stopped for a moment, and Mr. Carter, who used to run the Melrose Garage came out and introduced himself. He spoke of a night club he had been operating near St. Martinsville, but he didn't mention any of the bootlegging he used to practice in the old days, but that wasn't necessary, for the darkies at Melrose had told me all about that long ago.

Just as we were about to move on, Tony heard me mention his name, and he accordingly came out from the group of colored hangers-on on the store gallery. We chatted for a moment, and he told me he was going up to see papa this evening. We told him he might ride with us. And so we headed south toward Derry while he headed north toward his mother's house, hard by Magnolia plantation. On our way back we picked him up at home and dropped him at the turn row leading to Frank's house near Cane River bridge.

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July 6th - Saturday - page 2.

Miss Post took me back to Melrose, promising to return on Monday afternoon or Tuesday to take pictures, since the intermittent rain this afternoon had made picture taking rather impossible.

I had just time to bath and shave before supper, after which I talked with Mary regarding the funeral of Elam Brown which is scheduled for tomorrow. From appearances at that moment, it seemed doubtful if the services could be held, since the rain had put the roads between Melrose and the little church on the Bayou in a quagmire, and the bayou, itself was rising. It took Elam Brown so long to die, it would seem that it will take as long to get his funeral services over and done with.

Frank was washing the dishes for Mary, who was busy putting food away. She is inclined to be frail, and Frank is good. Just as she was about to leave, Mary, to her vast distress, discovered that she had lost her tobacco from her dress pocket. She looked all over the place for it, with Frank helping her. He whispered to me that it had fallen on the drainboard, and had been soaked by dish-water. But, together, they finally found it, and Mary said goodnight and was on her way, as was Frank on his.

I worked at my machine for a little over an hour, and then went to bed. But I awoke a little later, remembering that Celeste had invited me over for a little party.

Somehow I never did get to her house, but it was pleasant to get lost in the hedge-rows along the way. By eleven o'clock the sky was glittering with stars, with not a cloud in the skies. Surely tomorrow would be a beautiful day, and we would be able to mount our horses, and ride away toward the lost bayous of little river, with sandwiches to fortify us, and the services for Elam Brown to give us pause. It would be a fine day alright.

In the middle of the night, I was awakened by the bell on the gate ringing violently. Meinzie, who was sleeping on the rug beside my bed, braked much too loudly. I turned on my sash light and stepped onto the front gallery. I could see night. The great grandfather's clock struck one. I walked out to the gate gowned in my slippers. A minute after the clock repeated the stroke of one. I returned to my downy couch, content to believe that Monstrosity might have been trying to negotiate the picket gate and so had been guilty of disturbing the peace. And so once more to bed.

BTF



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July 8th - Sunday.

I was glad to see Frank wearing his great coat when he arrived between five and six, for it was teeming rain outside.

Many little matters had transpire of which we both knew something, and it was fun to piece them together. We both had noticed the beautiful star-studded sky, and had both thought the morrow would be perfect. By one means and another, we had already planned for a companion on my four mile journey back to the church on the bayou for Elam Brown's funeral services, and there was the idea that I might take a picnic lunch if things got under way before dinner.

It was still raining when I had done with breakfast, and I accordingly made my Sunday morning rounds a little more be-sprinkle that Sunday morning dew is want to effect. I found Sam Brown and Mary, the cook, in the kitchen. Someone had just arrived saying that the rising water in the bayou would make it difficult if not impossible for many of the people to reach the church, and so the funeral services had been postponed until the first Sunday in August. It seems that the Church is having as difficult a time in getting Elam Brown definitely planted as did the Hospital in town in killing him. It is certainly odd how the case of Elam Brown looms so large in my mind and that of many of my colored friends, since in reality not much could ever be said for Elam, himself, but I must say even less can be said for an institution that discharges a patient suffering from plural pneumonia and has to have a drain tube inserted in his lung the same day he returns from the hospital.

About eleven, Sister and her family blew in, and as yet I assumed that I might be expected to go to her house for dinner, since that was the last understanding I had had with her, and as Aunt Cammie had written that she was giving Mary the day off in order to be in church on time to sing her solo.

But nothing was said about dinner until the Melrose bell rang, and Sister and her husband, who had come to chat with me, went along with me as a matter of course to dinner. Lucky Mary with a rising bayou.

The table seemed vast, with only Sister, the Dr., Pat and I to grace the board. Afterward I returned to my house to WDBK. Harry came over for a few moments to chat with me. A little later Joe came in to ask if he might read something. We chatted about Indians. I forgot that he is supposed to have some blood in him, and I'm afraid I set them out rather badly for which I am sorry.

At five, Celeste came over to ask me to have supper with her and J. H., and then I learned that Sister had gone some time ago. I enjoyed my supper much, and the pleasant two hours we had together. At seven I rounded up my animals, fed them, and so returned to my desk to write until eight. btf.

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July 8th - Monday.

It hadn't started raining when I went to bed about 9:30, but when I awoke about five o'clock this morning it was pouring, and Grandpa, who came in ~~with~~ with Frank, seemed glad to hop into bed and snuggle up close before I had had my first cup of coffee.

I got out quite a batch of mail between late breakfast at seven o'clock and nine o'clock when I waded over to Celeste's, and together we drop up the drenched river road to Beth's house.

She gathered us up and drove back to Oakland, the Alphonse Prudhomme house, near the Bermuda bridge. Somehow I have always felt that this Alphonse Prudhomme house was more or less the center of La Cote d'oyeuse in ante-bellum days, and I am glad that the avenue of oaks and the old house have survived the years.

Madame Alphonse Prudhomme greeted us cordially and asked us in to the front drawing room, where she presented her daughter-in-law, and several children,--Prudhommes, doubtlessly, but offspring of which Mrs. Prudhomme, I was uncertain.

Representations made, we glanced over the splendid old portraits that, as at Jean Prudhomme's house, hung too high up, so that one can see them but indifferently, if at all. They are beginning to show effects of dampness, especially that of old Mr. LeCompte of Magnolia Plantation, and the original Manuel or Manuel Prudhomme who is painted holding a bowl of cotton in his hand, carrying out the family tradition that it was he who first introduced cotton into this region which would seemed very odd to me, if true.

After a few moments chat, Beth and Celeste said goodbye, promising to pick me up about 11:30, and I was then introduced to Mrs. Sers, whom one of the little Prudhomme girls affectionately called Santa Claus. Old Mr. Sers is some ninety years old, and his mind and memory seem to be in unusually clear focus. I only regretted that he had never known so little about people in this region whom I had ever heard of. He didn't seem prone to reminisce, although he was charming in his effort to give the correct answers to my questions which I soon began wracking my brain to think of, in order to keep him talking.

As a guest at the Prudhommes,--or he may be some kin,--I suppose he may not have spoken as freely as he would have, had we been elsewhere. For instance, he told me that he remembered Jean Prudhomme, that he was inclined to be short rather than tall, and in later years, had become slightly corpulent. Beth had hinted before we arrived that some of the Prudhommes had tried to conceal whatever the scandal was about Jean, but Beth thought there was a woman of color who lived near his house who bore his children. I thought this might be the family of Prudhommes of color who later moved down Cloutierville way, but old Mr. Sers said he never heard of either the woman or of any colored Cloutierville family of Prudhommes of color. This seemed odd, since the old man had lived in Cloutierville most of his life.



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and never heard of this family, since Aunt Cammie had heard much about it, and both old Madam Aubert-Orcque and her son, Denis, recalled them very distinctly as individuals, but couldn't remember to which Prudhomme family they were kin.

He couldn't remember how any houses, burned during the Confederate War around La Cote Joyeuse, had looked, and had never seen Jean's house, either before or after the war. He didn't remember having ever seen the Compte-Hertzog house on Magnolia Plantation before it was burned by General Banks, although he did remember a number of buildings in and about Cloutier ville which had burned.

He said that the house where Sister now lives had been built by Nichol,--he wasn't sure if that was the man's first or last name, that he was an Italian and an uncle of Markoe, to whom he left all his property. I doubt very much about the Italian business, and possibly the builder of the house.

A large storage house just below Sister's house, full of cotton was fired he said, as were other buildings in the town. He said the wind was blowing toward the river, however, and this saved a number of building in the town itself on this side of the river, but that a number,--if not all the buildings on the other side of the town were wiped out. I never knew there were any other buildings at any time, except on one side of the river. Below Cloutierville, for miles, he said he remembered the fine old houses that followed along the river, and every single one of them, except the Markoe and the. He said he could remember a great number of these fine old places,--

whose families had been hustled out by the Yankees and the houses fired, leaving the families nothing but what they had on their backs.

I asked him why the steamboats so often delivered merchandise to Grand Core via Red River, for Watchitoches which was five miles away down on Cane River and for places like La Cote Joyeuse which must have been 15 miles or so. He said this was because Cane River was frequently too low for the boats to make the channel, and the Grand Core port on Red River was accordingly used, as the closest point to this hinterland, although all merchandise, both coming and going, went by Cane River when there was a normal amount of water.

Young Mrs. Prudhomme served us a delicious cup of coffee as we chatted, and shortly the elder Mrs. Prudhomme came in, inviting me to look over the house before Celeste came back to take me home. The ample drawing room in which we had been sitting was in the front center of the house. Folding doors, with an exquisite fan light of great width, opened into a splendid dining hall immediately behind the drawing room, enabling one to entertain an enormous concourse of people with no chance of being limited in space.

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July 8th - Monday - page 3.

to the left of this drawing room and dining hall that ran straight through the center of the house, ran three bed rooms, each more than ample in proportion. In these three rooms there were five beds, including two magnificent great four posters of clover-leaf design,--and wider beds than I have ever seen for beds of this period. I presume they must have been seven or eight feet wide. They seemed to be in excellent condition, too.

The rooms to the right of the drawing room had been mutilated by someone in the 90's who had cut a hall through the center of the house ~~from the front to the back~~ from the front to the back which is ever so long. Without cutting into the drawing room this hall was made to cut into the series of rooms themselves on the right, so that all of these were somewhat reduced in size as compared with those that balanced them on the other side of the house. In this side of the house, Alphonse Prudhomme, Jr. and his wife live, and Santa Calus has a room.

When we were done making the rounds, we stepped out on the gallery which runs about three sides of the house, and is one story up from the basement. I found Mrs. Prudhomme brought out a lovely miniature she had inherited from her family,--a lovely one of "illing Welles somebody, and a fascinating looking notebook which Phanor had kept of the family tree, family property both on Cane River and in Texas, etc., etc. I should like to borrow that.

But our chat came to an end when Celeste drove in and I had to make my "adieux" to which they pleasantly said must be merely "au revoir".

I am sorry to say that I think the present inhabitants of Oakland haven't the vaguest notion of what it is all about, and it would appear that they have not much money, and I am sure even less taste to put the place back in order. But one good bit of fortune is the fact that they are at least keeping a roof on it, and the windows and doors intact. Possibly someone will come along one day before the house is desecrated too much and will put it back in order.

Back home through the rain in time for dinner and afterward a most excellent mail, primarily from Hot Springs and Manhattan, including a thesis on "me. de la Houssaye, Medecine for Sam Brown and me, sections of the New York Times carrying pictures of the Nazi occupation of Paris, etc., etc.

I worked at my desk all afternoon until a little after four when Joe came by and we ran through a couple of things, including some articles in the Washington issue of House and Garden.

Supper at six and a round up of pets of their evening meal, and then a few moments of radio-listening, including an excellent



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excellent dissertation on certain phases of the ~~war~~ Confederate War. The speaker stressed the point that at its inception, everyone in the North and South thought it would be a pleasant little exchange of polite skirmishes which might last three months when a compromise would be arranged and the matter settled.

He spoke of Capt. Anderson as holding Fort Sumter more as a gesture and the firing on the fort by the Carolinians as little more than a flourish of arms, since both sides knew that since the fort wasn't provisioned, it couldn't hold out but a few days. He also remarked that Anderson surrendered on the theory that the barracks had caught on fire, although the fire had been extinguished before the Carolinians moved in, and with its capture, Capt. Anderson accepted the invitation of the Carolinians to dine with him at a banquet in Charleston that evening.

The speaker stressed certain foreign economic aspects of the struggle which I presume are frequently overlooked by the student who sticks too closely to the American scene in studying the conflict. Before the war broke out, England was taking five-sixths of all the cotton the South produced. In 1860 English manufacturers had a surplus of raw cotton sufficient to last them three years while about two million people in English mills town were out of work because the market of manufactured cotton cloth was clogged with merchandise. Either disregarding this situation or completely failing to analyze it, the Confederacy expected that when the Federals blockaded Southern ports, and cotton was thus shut off, England would automatically feel the need for the raw product to keep its mills going and therefore join with the South in breaking the blockade.

Obviously, however, England,--and particularly the wealthy and influential manufacturers had very scant interest in whether there was a blockade or not, in fact, they soon discovered that the blockade worked wonders for their own bank rolls. For the news of the blockade sent cotton manufactured goods soaring in price while the mill operators with a vast surplus of the raw material could maintain their usual low rate of pay to the laborer and yet at the same time sell the finished products and five or six times its former price. Naturally they weren't enthusiastic about breaking the blockade. It seems to me that the appreciation of these more remote economic aspects of the struggle are imperative to the student or layman who seeks a more perfect understanding of the struggle which too frequently in popular concept and histories is concerned almost exclusively with regional difference in the Nation and military tactics of the conflict.

To illustrate the casualness with which both sides

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contemplated the impending conflict, the speaker described Bull Run as duplicate of the Fort Sumter in the approach of the battle by both sides.

There were some 25 thousand Confederate troops about 35 miles south of Washington. The Federal troops, numbering some 30 thousand, must go down and exchange some salvos of musketry to bring this whole business to a close. The Federal troops paraded in Washington, and crowds acclaimed them, not in any patriotic frenzy, but rather in the applause that accompanies a fourth of July parade. Marking out of the city, with flowers stuck in the end of their rifles, the troops were accompanied by a vast concourse of Washington citizens, driving along in their carriages. Senators and representatives deserted the council chambers to join in the frolic, attired in holiday raiment, and taking a basket luncheon with them. ~~xx~~ Halting along the route, patriotic speeches of a frivolous nature were delivered, the picnic luncheon was spread about and whiskey bottles passed from hand to hand. Altogether it was a gay a sally into battle as ever organized society had conceived.

On the Confederate side, the occasion was considered lightly, too, in contrast to the years of bloodshed that were to follow. The picnic spirit prevailed and good cheer ~~flowed~~ flowed round.

When contact was established between the opposing sides, the Confederates bore down with unexpected vigor, and automatically the Federals abandoned their equipment and headed for Washington as fast as their legs could carry them. Over-stuffed Congressmen, their baskets of food in confusion and their bottles of champagne upset, ran helter-skelter in the general direction of the Capitol, while in the city itself, Lincoln and all the government momentarily expected the enemy to take it over, as there were no troops to protect it. They didn't know that the Confederates had been pretty well disorganized, too, thanks to the headiness of the skirmish and the flowing bowl.

And thus the dissertation finished, and I was glad to have stumbled upon it, since in hearing it, I felt that I better understood the opening scenes of a drama which was to turn out such a tragedy for the South and such a loss to the Nation as a whole.

I worked at my desk until nine and so to bed.



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July 9th - Tuesday.

I couldn't believe it when I awoke this morning, and found a perfectly blue sky. It seems like years that it haven't been raining & or threatening to rain between four and five each morning.

And when Frank arrived at five, he somehow mirrored the happiness that all nature must have felt for the promise of a rising sun, for the first thing he said was: "It sure looks like a pretty day". And so it was.

I got out a batch of mail before eight, made a little round of the house and gardens to see how things appeared in the almost forgotten early morning sunshine, and so to the store with the mail, and a little conversation on the gallery with several colored people who refelated their satisfaction in the sun by much merriment, more from sheer pleasure at a return of sunshine, it appeared, than for any other reason. The ground is so soaked they will not be able to work for several days, even though the sun may shine continuously for two or three days in a row, but still there is the realization that there is a sun, and possibly next week will bring them something other than idleness,--which isn't so bad, but an absence of any cash at the end of the week is.

There was a nice mail, from both the east and West coast, and a couple of spots in between, including Hot Springs, where things seem to be going nicely and Natchez, where the promise of another visit fills me with delight.

On the way back to my huse, I stopped off to chat with Henry about the loom ~~is~~ he is making for Mary Lambdin. We chatted about other things, too. He told me his wife had been feeling powerful bad all night long. He is expecting to have to take her to the maternity section of the Charity Hospital any day now.

Henry was working on the far side of the loom house, on the ~~xx~~ orchard side, and told me that about eight o'clock the jays made such a racket down along the fence, he had gone down there to see what was going on, and of course it was a chicken snake that was "worrying" them. Later, he had gone to the lumber barn, and there had seen a stinging snake,--a curious reptile which they say stings with its tail, as does a bee, although I myself can only take the darkies word for it.

As we were chatting about details concerning Mary's loom, Sam Brown appeared in the loom house with Henry's breakfast,--I suppose it was a little ~~after~~ after nine o'clock. Thus are geniuses fed, if sufficiently tempermental and essential for the general scheme of things.

A little before ten Miss Post came with Celeste and together we had coffee before the African House, talking subjects for

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and exchanging activities since last we saw each other on Saturday.

I like the young lady. She is attractive and intelligent,--a rarity in any age and class, I reckon. There is a certain appreciation of fundamentals in her concept of humanities which is unusually refreshing, & in a locality in which so many of the youths and maidens don't seem to recognize any of the attractive attributes, save that of labor, which the colored race possesses.

Celeste in riding habit, and Miss Post in ~~xxx~~ abbreviated slacks, jumped into a car and ran down to Magnolia Plantation to take some shots of the old brick quarters which have been there since the time of Hertzogs, and possibly the Le Compts. I went back to my desk until the dinner bell rang.

A little afternoon one, I went over to Celeste's where Miss Post had been entertained for dinner, and we decided to take some Melrose pictures, particularly interiors, while the sun was so high. We took a couple of shots of the great fan window in my house, the log arrangement of the walls in Dr. Miller's house, and exterior photographs of the mud construction on Lyle's shaded gallery in front. We also snapped the wash house before three o'clock, as well as the pigeoniere, Dr. Miller's house, the African House the Big House, and family groups and portraits of Frank and his daughter May, and Frank's little boy who had come over with his sister to do his part in a performance that must have seemed very dull to him. Most of this latter group we took before the stationary blinds at Lyle's on the side facing the white garden.

With Melrose out of the way, we started for Zeline's, but arriving on the other side of the bridge, and just in front of the saloon, we discovered that the road was in such a frightful condition that we could not travel it with the splendid car Miss Post was driving, since it was built so low that the body would be caught when the wheels dropped down in the cavernous ruts. The gallery of the saloon was heavily peopled with rained-out labor, but Bill wasn't too busy taking care of their scanty wants,--or abilities to buy, that he couldn't come out to offer us his old ford and a driver to climb the mountains and valleys of mud holes stretching between us and Zeline's house.

Leon Attoyer, who performs along with Fugabou and others on various Melrose tractors was pressed into service. We transferred four or five bags, cameras, tripod and whatnot from the one car to the other,--and leaving all we didn't need in the wide open roadster,--a sensation which is so pleasant in this strange locality where the car and all its contents, precious cameras and blankets, and extensive gadgets would be safer under the eyes of those looting on the gallery than it would be under the guard of a hundred marines.

The Ford started with a jitter and then a jerk, and before we knew it,--all laughing, we were careening from side to side of vast mud puddles with unpredicable bottoms and unbelievable craters. But eventually we made it, and all three of us, heavily laded unlatched Zeline's front gate.



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Zeline was on her front gallery, entertaining an elderly neighbor, while Joe was puttering about the yard. Edward stuck his head out the front door, and grinned a marvelous double row of white, white teeth, as he saw all the strange duffle we were bringing in.

Poor Zeline greeted us cordially, but wore a somewhat worried expression. She said she was glad to have us come but she didn't have any money to pay for the pictures. We all laughed and told her it wouldn't cost her a cent, at which she laughed too and so we got right down to business, snapping her and Joe beside the cistern with that strange eave's trough which carries the water from the house some 15 or 20 feet from the roof, and always reminding me of an old roller coaster sketch I had suggested for a French book, and somehow the French name,-- Russian Mountains --"Montaignes Russes" seems to appropriate for this ingenious fabrication of stakes and troughs for a Cane River location, attached to a mud house, occupied by bi-lingual mulattos.

Zeline's neighbor was a woman of some sixty or seventy, I reckon, and when we asked her if she would like to have her picture taken, she declined, explaining that she had never had one in all her life. But when she noticed that the camera really didn't bite and that Zeline and Joe took the whole thing as a frolic, she ventured that she wouldn't mind posing for just one, and so before she knew it, she was posing for a flock of them and getting a giddy delight out of it.

Stepping inside the cabin, Miss Post, like everyone else who visits the place for the first time, was profoundly impressed by the curious hodge-podge of beds, chairs, wall decorations, dirt floors and bevy after bevy of chickens that hazarded a foray for food on the hearth where the inevitable sause pans were simmering. This interior offered subject matter which might be sought after far and wide but seldom found, for here were assembled all the unusual combinations of chickens on the floor with the beds spotlessly clean, a feeling of poverty that was canceled by an atmosphere of satisfaction which the inhabitants had given the place. Being interested in mechanics, Leon was enchanted at an opportunity to hold the reflectors while flash light after flash light exploded as the various corners of the two rooms were being recorded. It always impresses me that Zeline, Joe and Edward always take visitors as a matter of course and never manifest the slightest resentment that their home is being invaded. I figure that this must be due in part to their feeling that this is their home and the way they like it and there fore there is no reason to be anything but satisfied when other people are fascinated by it.

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Around five thirty I had to suggest that enough pictures had been taken for one visit, since time was getting short before the upper bell at home would be ringing. I thoroughly understood how Miss Post felt loath to leave such a place which offered so much subject matter for the type of pictures she was anxious to record. But go we must, and so we said goodbye to our hosts, clambered into Will's old Ford again, and bounced and banged back over the mud and ruts to the saloon. The camera and other duffle were transfer back to the other car quickly and we had thanked Leon and Bill for their good offices, and we were heading back across cane river bridge and home. ~~Miss Post~~ some more pictures before sun down, and so we said au revoir until the morrow.

Supper and my little friends to feed afterward, and so for a belated shave and bath, and labor at my desk for a while.

Grandpa was knocking at my door as I finished one batch of apers, and so I thought I would have a cigarette on the gallery, on letting him in. But the night was so beautiful and the new moon so fresh and liquid, that I decided on a short stroll which took me through the front gardens, lost in a black curtain of black foliage, and so on to the garage and up the river road for a ways. Darkies passed me on the road, and while I couldn't see them well enough to identify their figures, I recognized them by their voices as they said Good evening. I passed Windsor and then eventually r turned home. It was ten before I decided on bed, and by then the moon was down.

It had been a good day and I was pleasantly tired so sleepy overtook me almost before I jumped into the great four poster where Grandpa was already lost in dreamland.



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July 10th - Wednesday.

It seems incredible, but the sky was all blue and gold for a second morning in success when I awoke about 4:30.

But after Frank had gone over the weather situation with me during my early morning coffee I came to the conclusion that we would be lucky if we didn't have a shower before the day was done, and according to the radio, as I ate my breakfast, showers are merely in the offing.

But making the most of the sun, I was in the big road for a long walk before seven. I expected to be back before nine, as Miss Nell was coming to take me back into the far reaches of Little River neighborhood to call on relief clients of hers.

Unfortunately, I didn't get back until nearly half past eleven, and met Miss Nell at the bridge, headed toward Natchitoches. I apologized, and she seemed to understand, and together we agreed that we would carry out the trip on Friday.

I bathed before dinner, and afterwards ran over the mail with Celeste, and so back to my typewriter until three when Miss Post came to see me. She said she had spent the morning, all along the West bank of Vane River taking old mulatto houses and had found the people more than kind.

We took a few pictures of the big house and then went over to Lyle's to enter particulars regarding yesterday's photographs in her note book.

There had been sharp thunder at noon but it hadn't even sent the sun to cover, but now the clouds began lowering, and suddenly a torrential cloudburst broke, and Miss Post dashed out to the front to put up the hood of her car and so save the cameras and things from being washed away. I slammed a couple of glass doors shut, and then went after her with a covering, but I myself was soaked before reaching the gate and she of course was drenched.

Back to Lyle's we got things dried out, enjoyed some things Frank brought for us, and when done were pleased to find that the sun was out again so that additional pictures of the African House might be taken in this light that differed so much from the noon day glare. In speaking of the African House, Miss Post suggested that it might have been built as a smoke house, or at least as a stor ge house, as she had known of one over in Georgia with certain features, such as the barred windows, etc., which she had understood from oldsters to have been built and used for that purpose. This theory sounds more plausible than the jail one, since I can't imagine plantations having to keep

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slaves in jail. After all, it would seem that keeping slaves in jail would be extremely uneconomic, and in no manner practicable. It would seem that justice for the slaves must have been rather swift, and I doubt if detention in a jail would have been practiced to such an extent as to merit a place of detention. After all the parish jail was undoubtedly pressed in to service when slaves needed restraint awaiting trial, and for ordinary infractions against the smooth running of the plantation, I imagine immediate punishment or sale of the offender obviated any need for a plantation jail.

We spoke of Aunt Cammie and how much Miss Post wants to know her, and of various subjects for photography in the Natchez area in October when the leaves have fallen sufficiently to make picture taking more or less possible, except for the potonist.

Toward sundown we drove over Vane River bridge, and sat for a time in the car. There were just a few big thunder clouds left in the sky, and the setting sun had turned their snowy whiteness into rose which had been dyed a thousand fold as the silver surface of the river, caught the pink on its dark surface and dyed it almost red.

We said goodbye about seven, and Miss Post went on to town for a long evening with Chamber of Commerce people while I lingered by the bridge, and then seeing Frank, grabbed off some ice cream for his little boy and so returned over the rain soaked, oozing road where I arrived with mud almost to my knees.

I worked for a couple of hours on my typewriter, and after a hot bath foled up.



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July 11th - Thursday

A misty curtain of gray cloudsmuffled the blue sky which seemed to be not quite so far away this morning when I awoke at four thirty.

But when Frank arrived at five little sketches of blue were struggling to bring their hope of better weather, but Frank said it was too wet for anyone to do any work in the fields this week.

After breakfast, I found that practically the same situation operated in regard to personal correspondence. As a matter of fact the humidity had increased to such an extent that all the envelopes were stuck together and even after they had been separated, I couldn't insert them in the typewriter to make out the addresses, for they inevitable stuck fast to the roller. I reckon both the darkies and I will be twice glad for a little uninterrupted dry weather.

Dinner and Dan didn't come down as he has just been stricken with malaria, although he says he cannot take quinine, and for my part I wouldn't know what would correct this malady by anything except quinine.

Back to Lyle's house to work at my machine until a little before three when Frank arrived with lemonade. The, for the first time I noticed that huge dark clouds were rolling in the north, and I thought of Celeste who had gone to town to join a party of friends who expected to spend the afternoon and evening on a house boat somewhere along the river.

With the first crash of thunder, Frank bolted out of Lyle's to make a round of the several houses to tighten the windows and doors. Scarcely had he left than the storm broke, with oceans of water falling and such a blast of wind, seemingly coming straight down from on-high, that the great trees in the gardens groaned and struggled against the onslaught, as branches cracked and hurtled to the ground. In spite of the width of the galleries on both sides of Lyle's house, the rain swept through the place in gusts that seemed to be little tornadoes arising from the ground, having bounced up from the driving force with which they struck the earth in their downward course. I had to shut all the doors and windows.

The roll of thunder was tremendous and thrilling and as the lightning flashed and the rumble intensified as time went on, I decided I would rest on the sofa for a few moments and drink in this wonderful display of the elements quite out of hand. The next thing I knew, the clock chimed four thirty, and it dawned on me that the tempest had lulled me to sleep. But the storm was still raging, and not until nearly five did it cease.

Supper a little after five, with only Eugene and me, and after that a round up of my little friends, some of whom seemed

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to have been out in the downpour, for Monstosity was thoroughly soaked and little Grandpa was more than dampish.

Frank had asked me if I didn't need anything after such a long day of activity, and I conceded that I probably did. He accordingly mounted his horse and crossed Cane River, turning within quarter of an hour.

The clouds had all gone by this time, and a delicious afterglow lingered on in the sky. We chatted together until after eight, exchanging confidences, and talking lots about crop conditions, how one took care of cattle if this thing or the other might be the matter with them, how good it would be to have the madam bac, etc., etc.

When we stepped out onto the gallery, we noticed the pattern of light which the moon made along the brick pavement. We had been sitting in the dark for half an hour,--semi-darkness, at least, and the new moon in the freshly washed sky seemed brighter than it had ever seemed before. I suppose Frank made it seem like that.

I had thought at first that I might take a short walk but decided against it, as I realized that no one would be walking on a night such as this, for the roads must have been entirely under water. And so Heinzie followed me back into the house and resumed his dreams on his pillow in the corner, while Grandpa folded up his beard on my feet in the big for poster and before we knew it, all of us were in dreamland.



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July 12th - Friday.

It was warm and humid when I awoke as Frank arrived this morning. As always, one wouldn't know if Frank were tired or not, but I am quite sure I was.

I accordingly had my second cup in bed and almost dozed off again before a quarter of six, when I finally arose, somewhat languidly y rounded up Meinzie, who was sleeping late, too, and with Grandpa in our train, went from Lyle's house over to mine for breakfast.

By this time the sun was vaguely filtering through the evaporating banks of mist that hung low in the sky, and it was obvious that the day would be a steamer.

But I was glad that the rains might be done without for a part of the day, at least, for Miss Nell had promised to pick up Celeste and me this morning and take us down Mountville way to drop in on some of the darkies who are the object of her attention in the relief programme. I especially wanted to hear Herod and Easter sing.

And so, after getting out my usual amount of mail, I ran over to Celeste's, thinking we might have coffee together and probably Nell would join us over the cups,--and so down the big road.

But instead of Nell appearing, who arrived but that odd little number who for the past year has been one of the priests at the Melrose church. Celeste asked Father Pixley if he wouldn't have coffee with us but he said he would prefer his usual drink--two jiggers of Scotch with a little soda.

Although I had met him before, I had never talked with him, and I was accordingly interested to see if he proved to be as dumb intellectually as his behavior in the big road would indicate, for he always seemed to be trying to indicate to a waiting world how adept he is in handling his big car, although I must say the world seldom waited to be impressed. And I never liked the way he slipped in the side door of the saloon to get his liquor instead of marching in the front door the way everyone else does.

Somehow conversation got around to the darkies, and I didn't fail to respond to an inquiry regarding my enthusiasm for them, that in truth I admired them much and loved them more. I asked Father Pixley if he hadn't grown to like them too. In response, he explained that he really didn't know any of them,--which struck me as poor taste if not altogether inane. I told him I thought it a great pity that as the spiritual adviser of a church made up exclusively of mulattoes that he hadn't ~~xx~~ after a year grown to know any of them. I felt impelled to remark that in my opinion that was probably one good reason why both the Catholic and Protestant Churches have fallen to such a low estate in public estimation, but out of respect for Celeste I said nothing, and besides, if I had

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he would probably have remarked that in reality there was but one Church, as I should imagine he would much rather haggle over some such point than to manifest the slightest interest in any of his flock.

After he had had his second round of Scotch and Soda, I withdrew, hoping to find some mail, as I did, with a letter from Hot Springs saying that Aunt Cammie would be home this evening. That was something I could under-write with a loud Amen.

Around 11 o'clock, I returned to Celeste's to inquire if a message had come through from Hot Springs for them, so they would know about making ~~atx~~ connections at Shreveport. I found Father Pixley still there, and I joined him and Celeste in another round of Scotch and Soda, hoping that by now the reverend father would be on his way so that Celeste and I could run through the mail. Eventually he made up his mind, forgetting to say goodbye to me as he left, although I suppose he was too drunk to realize I was even there, and for that reason I must say that I don't think he failed to say goodbye intentionally.

There was a wonderful letter from New York which I wish I might have read over and over again. Among other things it spoke of tropical flowers and Spanish moss and personal matters which touched my heart. There was reference, too, to the "Alon" documents from the African Repository and a mention of photostats, revealing a labor of love that stood for much more than mere words could reveal.

There was also a nice letter from Miss Corinne Henderson of Belmont, "atchez, and another lovely letter from Manhattan with notations, even by Zouzou, that touched me deeply.

And so back to Lyle's house I flew to dash off a couple of letters before noon, and easily I accomplished this before a quarter of twelve, when a familiar tinkle of the bell on the gate and a voice with which I was already familiar although comparatively new, announced that Miss Post had come back to see me. I had rather expected her yesterday but realized of course that the terrific cyclonic storm was bound to have prevented her from getting here.

We weren't long in catching up on what had been going on in and about the Parish in the last 24 hours, when the dinner bell rang. I asked her if she wouldn't have something to eat with us, but she declined. I accordingly excused myself, and on my way in to dinner asked Frank if he wouldn't see that a nice tray went over to Mr. Saxon's cabin. He did of course, and a few minutes later, after a hurried dinner on my part, I joined Miss Post for coffee with her.

After a cigartette, we jumped in her car and ran down to Henry's house, found him at home, and so brought him back to Melrose



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to have his photograph both at weaving and also at carpentry work on the new loom he his building for Mary Ambdin.

These out of the way, we took him back to his little cabin where Miss Post made several pictures of the cabin itself and a number of close-ups of Henry and his little boy, Joseph. It will be interesting to see these after they have been incorporated into the files of the Historic Buildings Section of the Information Bureau of the Department of Agriculture in Washington. And I suppose that not the least interesting feature for me will be to note if the difference in skin coloring as between father and so will be manifest in these photographs, particularly as Henry is so light he seems almost white while Joseph is so dark he is almost dark chocolate. And in the films of the other day when Frank and his little boy were photographed, for that case should reveal the opposite with Fran rather deeper in tan-like color and his little boy almost white.

And so with the photographs of the Cane River people finished, we drove over to the saloon to see if any other particularly striking types should be patronizing this poor man's club, now that the rains of the past weeks had made working in the fields impossible.

There were a few pleasant faces there but nothing especially striking,--Bill, Marvin, Terrance, J.B., Whang and Buddy Bear. Knowing we should not see each other again very soon, we sat for half an hour, sipping a cold drink and musing about Cane River as we contemplated the deep blue reflection of sky on the placid surface of the water. Miss Post asked if I thought Aunt Cammie would mind if she dropped her a letter, saying how sorry she was to know Cane River without knowing her, since she felt that knowing one without the other gave one but half an understanding of the other. She also hoped that Aunt Cammie and I might run over to "atchez" with her in October to take loads of photographs of a flock of old forgotten mansions in the back country from Woodville to Vicksburg.

And thus we said goodbye, and Miss Post drove away toward Louisville, Kentucky, and I lingered for a few moments on the gallery to chat with Terrance's mother for a few moments,--we had taken her picture,--the first she had ever had,--at Celine's the other day. Edward came along before I left, and we enjoyed a bear together. As I stood on the gallery of this most beautifully situated saloon in all the world, I thought I recognized a figure leave the saloon, mount a horse and ride back over the bridge. I followed shortly afterward, and of course found Frank waiting for me at the other end of the bridge, half hidden in a clump of trees.

I berated him soundly for failing to speak to his friends, and even sneaking out on them. He grinned all over and said he had done so because he didn't want to "worry" me. I loved that.

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Back home, I worked for a couple of hours at my desk, and then after a leisurely shave and bath, I responded to the supper bell.

All the pets were awaiting me on my completion of supper, and all of them fell to on their own rations as though they hadn't eaten anything in years.

And so to my little maisonette to sit for a while to listen to the radio and gaze at the beautiful lights that illuminated the beautiful stained glass windows.

At five minutes of seven, just as the news broadcast for the evening was to appear, Frank arrived. I asked him to sit with me for a while, for we both thought Aunt Cammie should be ailing at almost any moment. At eight o'clock came as we chatted away, and I hadn't realized how the hands of the clock had swung around. Frank had had so many interesting things to tell me about his journey into the far reaches of "little" river regions that morning. He had gone on horseback with several other men to look after the stock. Their horses had had to swim the bayous, now so choked with water, and even the pasture lands were inundated, it seems. He said the cattle had congregated for the most part on little knolls here and there, and that all sorts of living things had sought various refuges from the high water, in fact many of the trees were seemingly alive with serpents which had crawled up and out on the branches, and that the men had knocked several of these off as they rode under the trees.

Just as the clock on the mantle chimed eight, we heard the sound of voices, and it of course proved to be Aunt Cammie. She looked wonderful and as rested as though she had been away from care and responsibility for months instead of only two weeks.

There was much to be talked about,--so many things she had to tell me about by way of experiences in Hot Springs, and how she had told Hobina to please come down to "elrose" this week end so that I might see her in the full bloom of youth,xxx.

When told that Dan was suffering from malaria, she of course immediately called on him, finding that his temperature was 103. After he had been doctored, she returned to caht with me, and to say that she felt she had better resume her daily doze of quinine in the amount of ten grains, since with one person in the house suffering from it, the mosquitos might easily catch up with her.

And so, after talking until almost nine, I said goodnight, and so returned to the front garden to turn out the lamp on the gate. But I couldn't return to Lyle's house immediately, the moon was so beautiful and the night so balmy, and so, without seeing anyone along the route, which seemed odd, I walked to the bridge, and thence to the saloon where I purchased some ice cream, talked for a few moments with Terrance and two other boys I didn't know but who knew me, and so back home. And it was only then that I had found the road so void of familiar figures.



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July 12th - page 5 - Friday.

Beer and some contemplation of things which the day had brought.--Miss Post, correspondence from afar, Aunt Cammie, and stories I had heard of the strength of Terrance and how well he can carve hen provoked beyond all reason. This and many other things and so for another little turn before going to bed to sleep.

The moon made nice round golden surfaces on the mud puddles along the road so that I could avoid them nicely until a car came along and stopped some distance ahead of me, blotting out both the moon and the puddles with its glare. It was Bill who had closed the saloon, but seeing me thought I might be in quest of ice cream, and offered to return for anything I wanted. But it was merely the night that I wanted and so I thanked him and continued on my little tour,--but shortly afterward saying good night to all those subdued colors that sooth all natural and human elements into one, and so home, across the deeply shadowed gardens and to bed. .

DLM

514

July 13th - Saturday.

Another cloud-draped dawn, with a night of heavy humidity.

Five o'clock and Frank and six o'clock and breakfast, with seven o'clock and a flock of mail out of the way

A little after eight I ran over to say good morning to Aunt Cammie but unfortunately I found the morning not too good, since the quinine she had thought it wisdom to take last night had had an adverse effect on the high spirits with which she had returned last night. But, as always, her sense of humor stood her in good stead, and together we chatted about happenings in the past two weeks, and among other things she told me that she had urged Robina ~~xx~~ to come down this week-end, pointing out to her that she owed it to herself to show herself to me while she was still enjoying "the bloom of youth" which Hot Springs had given her.

Nine o'clock and the mail, with a huge envelope for me, containing photostatic copies of various pages from the publication of the American Colonization Society, embracing fragments from the years 1828, 1829 and 1830. Also attached were type written sheets covering a variety of testimonials of that era, written from Africa,--and all relating to the Prince of Gallon.

Both of us were floored by the evidence of labor and generosity this packet evidenced.

At ten Celeste came over for coffee, so we laid aside what we were itching to get into for a three cornered exchange of the arish doings while Aunt Cammie was away. By 10:20, the clouds opened and the floods descended, so that Celeste had to remain until nearly dinner time.

Dinner done, and the rain, too, for the moment, Aunt Cammie slipped on her rubbers and made a little tour of the back gardens with me, after which we dropped by Lyle's, where we ran over some recent mail and clippings which were precisely in line with matters of moment to us.

But our little tete-a-tete was interrupted by Rayne who came to ask his mother for certain points in the family's vital statistics, which seems to be needed for Henry holdings or inheritances in Texas. Aunt Cammie said she would be glad to look it up, but as it was all Henry business,--and as she aint no kin to the Henry's she was surprised they didn't have such data on file.

And so she said goodbye to me, and I feel on to a batch of correspondence which I had neglected during the morning.

Pausing for a moment between letters, I reached for a cigarette but immediately discovered that thanks to the excessive humidity, neither my lighter would work nor would any matches in the house, and so I started for the kitchen in the big house for a live coal.



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July 13th - Saturday - page 2.

And so out the picket gate from the front garden to Ayle's house and along the wall of greenery I journey, noting the great sagging blossoms of the giant crepe-myrtles, bending low with their burden of this morning's rain. But as I approached the solid block of fig trees that terminate the alley, I came to a sudden halt, as a memory of a line in one of Abina's letters to Aunt Ammi last summer flashed across my mind:

"By now, I suppose, the little colored boys are in the fig trees."

Then I had read the line in New York whence Aunt Ammie had sent me the letter, but now, a year later, the same line blended with reality, for there in the fig trees swarmed little colored boys deftly slipping rip figs into little shiny tin buckets. I was enchanted at the sight and the coincidence.

And this sight afforded me an opportunity to dab in some colors which my imagination had omitted in last year's contemplation of the picture this line had created,--for then I hadn't thought of the receptacles which the little boys would be holding, and so a touch of silver had to be painted in to bring the concept into line with actualities.

I never did understand why the line had struck me so forcibly, and I presume it wouldn't strike any one else, and yet for me it somehow created an luscious composite picture of all the impressionist school of French painting, with Cousseau and all his simplicity of drawing and charm of color and design the dominating theme. And here it was in a living picture, fully as colorful as I had pictured it in my mind, but more vibrant, of course, thanks to the sweet dampish smells rising from the rain-soaked flowering hedges, and punctuated by the scream of blue jays and the lilt of singing cardinals whose combined antiphonal serenade was frequently blotted out by the re-current laughter from the branches where the little colored boys angled with out-stretched arms for further soft green prizes just beyond their reach.

At three Frank arrived with lemonade and dessert,--the latter being a nice big bowl of pebbled figs, supplemented with sugar and cream. These were the first figs, immediately from the trees which I had ever tasted, and in consequence to their excellence I told Frank to say to the Madam that I was enchanted she had returned to Melrose.

At 3:30 Joe Pease came by to ask if he might read to me. Thunder had been rolling for ten minutes, but now it advanced sharply and another drenching rain descended. And so we found something to read until the rain stopped, primarily from clippings about the old clock which after years of absence is being restored to Herald Square in New York,--that charming, if not beautiful mechanism embracing little dwarfs which strike the houses and two little owls which blink their eyes on the hour.

516

July 13th - page 3. Saturday.

The supper bell rang at five thirty, and we were six, including Sister who had come up from Cloutierville.

During the morning chat with Aunt Ammie, I had spoken to her about the fine work Miss Post had done in this region, and Aunt Ammie said she wanted to drop her a line, expressing regret that she wasn't here during her visit, but hoping that she would be able to return in October during her vacation. Just as supper was finished, Rat suddenly asked his grandmother if she liked to have people chase all over her place taking pictures of everything. I grinned, and I realized whence the idea for such a question had come to Rat, and I grinned again when his grandmother said that she was delighted and that she wondered if it was any body's business except her own whether pictures were taken here or not.

At seven o'clock the house was in repose again, and together we resumed our reading of the Gallon photostats which we had relinquished to reluctantly at coffee time. It had started pouring again outside, and it was still raining when I said good-night at eight and so to bed.



517

July 14th - Sunday.

My way of a change, it was sprinkling when Frank arrived at five this morning.

But after I had bathed and breakfasted, and had listened to the European news broadcasts, there was an interlude of sunshine, during which I refurbished my vases of dahlias and regal lilies.

I labored at my desk until ten, when I went over to the big house, to find Aunt Cammie reclining on her sofa, still a little below par, thanks to the quinine she had taken last night. She spoke about what unexpected things quinine may do to people, and said that at Hertzog attributed his deafness to quinine he had taken while a student at L.S.U. I sometimes begin to feel I can sympathize with Mat.

Frances came in for coffee with us, and just after she arrived, it began pouring, maintaining the pace until after eleven.

I labored until the twelve o'clock dinner bell rang, and resumed my work immediately after breaking bread.

Shortly afterward Frank appeared at my door. I got up from my desk, but he said he didn't want me to stop on his account. I wanted to.

We sat down in the library, and he spoke of a new manifestation of fear of physical violence, along the lines that had disturbed him last Sunday. He spoke of his efforts to do his work faithfully, and how it seemed impossible to anticipate the whims of one person. His voice broke as he spoke, and tears silently coursed down his cheeks. I asked him to come and sit beside me on the sofa. He did so. We spoke of the appreciation which the Madam had for his unflinching qualities, and how much it meant to have her trust and that of J. H. Withot giving him a chance to say anything under the nerve strain of the moment, I kept talking without stopping, and eventually got the conversation around to a subject which I know never fails to interest him and of which he knows much. Then I allowed down my stream of talk, giving him a chance to tell me a couple of things about episodes which had happened on Cape Liver long before he came to Elrose. Eventually we got around to a slightly humorous angle, and before either of us realized it we were both laughing, and before it was time for him to prepare mid-afternoon refreshments, the pressing nature of the disturbance which troubled him had receded into the background.

And so I went back to my typewriter on which I hammered until five, when I shaved and bathed, and so went to supper.

After that the family left, and Aunt Cammie and I began reading from Sydnor's Slavery in Mississippi, where we ran across the names of many old "friends", whose old plantations we had so often visited with so much enthusiasm. And so at eight to bed,--with the rain teeming outside.

518

July 15th - Monday.

It was raining when I awoke at 4:30 but it had dwindled to a sprinkle when Frank arrived at five.

We chatted a little longer than usual this morning, and my second cigarette and my second cup of coffee were threatening to desecrate my pillow before Frank gave Grandpa his final patting, had gone and I had leaped into my bath. By six o'clock, I was headed from Lyle's house to mine, but already the sound of voices of youths in the fig trees proclaimed that Pat's coterie of dusky assistance were on the job early.

Last night Mat had been a little glump in contemplating the fig trees on the morrow, for someone had promised the colored boys, ranging in ages from eight or ten to sixteen, that if they would be on the store gallery next morning at five, he would take them all to a C.C.C. camp for enrollment for a couple of weeks. All the boys, including Mat had thought this might be so, since the man seemed in good faith, according to the accounts patched together by the darkies, but from the voices that greeted my ear from the leafy branches of the trees, I gathered that the flyer into the Civilian Conservation Corps had merely put them out on a limb earlier than usual this morning.

Coffee came at ten o'clock, after I had sent off a batch of mail, and Aunt Cammie came about the same moment to join me over a demi-tasse. She seemed to have regained much of the "blüm of youth" which she accused Bobina of having, so it would appear that the relinquishing of the quinine last night was a chance worth taking in spite of the natural increase in the mosquito population as a natural sequence of so much rain.

The mail came about 10:30, and we ran through it rather hurriedly, save for two letters,--one from Hreveport and one from Manhattan, and then ran through the House and Garden's special number on Washington, Mt. Vernon, Arlington, etc., which we both enjoyed the better for sharing it thus.

At eleven thirty, Aunt Cammie left to make a round of the big house, while I switched on my radio, but found European news having been shelved for the opening sessions of the Democratic Convention meeting in Chicago. To me the addresses of the opening sounded whoefully political and dull, and I was enchanted to hear the dinner bell ringing in the midst of some wag's speech, enabling me to turn it off in favor of much more meaty fare.

Dinner done, I returned to my desk at Lyle's, where I remained all afternoon, foresaking my typewriter but twice,--once to chat with Frank when he brought me my lemonade, and once to close all the windows in the house when a terrific windstorm carried a drenching rain on to both galleries. It didn't stop raining until after eight o'clock.



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July 15th - Monday - page 2.

For a couple of hours after supper, Aunt Cammie read from Sydnor's Slavery in Mississippi, which astonished us for the amount of information it gave regarding the activities of the colonization society in that State in ante-bellum days, and more especially the extraordinary sums given by planters for the re-patriation of the colored people to Africa and the liberality of others, such as Judge Green in making such ample provision for their passage and the diligence with which his executors carried out his wishes.

Eight o'clock and we said good night, and to bed I went, with Grandpa accompanying me. I was asleep before eight thirty but I awoke before nine thirty, took care of a bottle of coca-cola, chatted with Grandpa a bit, and so back to sleep without awakening until 2:30, when I turned over and went to sleep again. BTB

520

July 16th - Tuesday.

Awakening at four thirty, I found it good to feast on the unusual sight of a smooth spread of perfectly blue sky with not so much as a hint of haze of a cloud.

When Frank arrived at five, I asked him what he made of such a business,--no rain clouds after all these days of endless rain. Obviously he was delighted with the prospect of some sunshine, and exuded cheeriness as he remarked: "It's plumb clair". I like the way so many of the darkies and mulattos combine local expressions in English with isolated word in French. "Plum clair" is as good a one as I have heard recently.

By six o'clock the little colored boys were in the fig trees again, their voices from this distance sounding like the first twitters of songsters at dawn when birds so often begin their morning chorus in softer tones before the full brilliance of the day brings on a more full throated volume.

After breakfast, incling a heaping bowl of ripe figs and cream, I got back to my desk, and tossed off a dozen letters of a couple of pages each, closely typed, before the mail was called for at nine o'clock.

At ten Aunt Cammie came over for coffee with me at Lyle's, gay as always in spirit although somewhat exhausted physically, as she had slept but poorly. Together we ran through the mail which was meager, save for a few letters from old friends who can always be depended on to supplement the weaving on life's tapestry by adding new tints and giving new values to old ones by the messages that fly to and fro like winged shuttles fleetingly moving on the unexplored woof of the day's loom.

Dinner and afterwards an hour in the gardens, clipping off the seed pods from the great cannas which have now reached a height of six feet and are magnificent in their splendid yellows and scarlets. And so back to the house to check over some books on Williamsburgh, and so back to Lyle's and my typewriter on which I pounded until three when Aunt Cammie came to have lemonade, ice cream and figs with me,--

Until nearly five we worked on the Wailes diary, with Aunt Cammie reading and both of us interrupting from time to time to remark upon B. L. C's many virtues and the pity that the State should have been so niggardly with him concerning funds which were his by for labors he had performed for and at the request of it.

Supper at six, and afterward to Aunt Cammie's room where we read from Sydnor's Slavery volume, while a Pat, clad in his pajama pants, and looking rosy as a cherub from his new bath, read from the adventures of Dr. Doolittle. And at eight we all said goodnight and so to bed.



521

July 17th, Wednesday.

Today's dawning seems twice as remarkable as yesterdays, since it was beginning to exceed the imagination to suppose that two succeeding days could dawn without a deluge.

When Frank arrived at five, he remarked first thing that he knew I would be too glad to see the sun and to know that the roads would be alright for a walk.

And so after breakfast, I was out in the big road, and over the Cane River bridge before the sun had faded out the deep shadows of the little bayous that are developing at the base of some of the pine trees on its margin. But I didn't walk as far in that delicious hour as I had thought I might, for a car came along, and stopping, asked me if I wouldn't come to ride, and since the driver of the truck had gone to that trouble, I could scarcely refuse. Before 8:30 I was in town, but didn't linger a moment, but rather returned to the turn in the cement highway where Janet Chrystie came by shortly, and so I rode a ways with her. From Watachez, however, I walked several miles down the pavement which was boiling in the mid-morning heat, and my shirt was soaking when I turned into the Montrose lane, where I met J. H. coming from home. He asked me to ride for a little way with him, which I did, enchanted at the opportunity to cool off by the breeze the car created.

Back home before eleven, and through a cold shower and a few minutes of foreign news before dinner. We ran over the mail at demi-tasse time when all the rest had left, enjoying notes from New York, Shreveport and Oakland, and one from Mary Lambdin, expressing her determination to weave the hardest pattern possible on her new loom which Henry is making for her here, and which, sometime shortly, Mary will come over to take back with her to Watachez.

All afternoon Aunt Ammie and I worked on the Wailes' Diary, and after supper read in her room from earlier pages which she had gone over with Bobina.

When we said goodnight at eight, and I had started for Lyle's house, I was struck by the unearthly beauty of the African House, doubly impressive and weird in the deep shadows cast by the glowing moonlight on its tremendous, and over-weening roof. Somehow this great top-heavy apparition seemed to be loosed from its earthly foundations and half suspended from the ground, as though uncertain as to whether it would continue to hover there after these hundred and thirty years, or possibly it might not slowly float slowly upward in the heavy moon-soaked night, like a vast balloon which contains just enough helium to leave the object uncertain as to whether it should soar off into space or content itself by merely resting just off the ground.

It was really an extraordinary night, unique in beauty and

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July 17th - Thursday, - page 2.

and I felt that I could walk for hours without fatigue in such an atmosphere which so frequently, thanks to the fusion between earth and heaven, as is brought about by the mellowness of the night, insulates the body from weariness and gives the spirit wings to sail like a fleecy cloud, unmindful and unobstructed by mere matter.

Lights in cabin and big house alike silently one after another went out, and the good people of Cane River were asleep in their beds. I thought of some line in a play George Arliss had once romped through in which he referred to the moon as the goddess of robbers, lovers and other reprehensible people. Somehow with the people who were good having gone to rest, their sub-conscious spirits automatically awoke, and as shadowy figures teetered on the top of the rail fence as I passed the mule barn, and full-throated laughter from away beyond the river came floating through the luscious velvety humidity of the night, I realized more than ever how true that a new life begins operating immediately as another lays itself down to rest.

I saw Windsor and talked for ever so long. We were interrupted, but for merely a moment, and then on to endless conversation which seemed ever so short and without limitations.

Back home before ten thirty, I dropped by my maisonette to notice the peculiar effect of the shapes and shades through the great fan light as mellowed by the moon. And so with Grandpa I returned to Lyle's house where I sat for a while with a cigarette before retiring. My attention was struck by an symmetrical shadow on the white Osnaberg drapery at either side of the doors to the back gallery,--perfection, was the circle and exactitude in symmetry of design. I suppose it was six or seven inches in diameter, but obviously the type of insect which one doesn't care about domesticating. I accordingly caught the folds of the Osnaberg vigorously in both hands and then did a little foot work when

the object which had cast the shadow had fallen dazed to the floor.

And so back to ruminations on the current atmospheric situation which has piled up weeks of idleness for the darkies and a consequent debit on necessities which they have accordingly been forced to purchase on credit, of course, which of course will eat into the money made from cotton picking, if, indeed, it turns out that there should be cotton to pick,--and I imagine there will be some if not as much as usual.

And so to bed.

B.T.F and D.L.M.



523

July 18th- Thursday.

It had been easy to go to bed to sleep last night, but I found it equally pleasant to struggle to stay awake to absorb a few of the luscious sensations of such a delicious night. From my great four poster I could gaze out into the White Garden, seemingly so silent, and so uniform in hedges of greenery. On second glance came the realization that the night is seldom silent and slowly the vast orchestration of myriads of insects struck my consciousness just as the realization dawned on me that the great hedges which the moonlight seemed to have molded into a solid bank of green, was in reality graduated rows of white alphia, white regal lillies, white bushes with wreathes of blossoms blotting out the greenery, and dozens of plants and shrubs seemingly like little wavelets breaking against the great rows of bamboo and giant bananas in the background. And yet as I struggled to keep conscious of all this coincidental harmony, I must have silently slipped into a dream world equally delicious which terminated only at five o'clock when I awoke as Frank with tray in hand stood beside my bed, ostensibly talking with Grandpa at my feet, but in reality as a soothing sound to awaken me as gently as he knew how from my sleep.

We laughed together at my propensities for sleeping, for it is extraordinary when I do not awaken before, and usually just before Frank arrives.

By six o'clock, however, I had ransacked the dahlia and Confederate Lily sections, had become drenched from the excessive dew, had bathed and breakfasted, and was on my way with a stack of correspondence.

By eight thirty, this was out of the way and Aunt Cammie came over to work with me on the Wailes Diary, on which we concentrated until eleven when guests at the big house required her attention and a new batch of correspondence called to me.

Dinner and afterward more work together until after three, when Frank brought vanilla ice cream, in which he had stirred chilled figs, a filling dessert of which I ate twice as much as anyone with sense would have.

Tree thirty and Joe came to ask if I had any reading for him to do. Pat and some of his coterie in the fig-picking business also tramped through the front garden in pursuit of little Grandpa who had just gone native and stalked a young chickadee successfully.

Six o'clock and supper, with an hour's reading afterward, sandwiched in between or rather on either side of a visit from Celeste who dropped in until J. H. returned from Baton Rouge for the day.

At eight thirty we said goodnight, and so over to Lyle's where I worked at my desk until nearly ten when Orpheus called me to my downy couch.

BTF.

524

July 19th - Friday.

A beautiful dawn when I awoke at ten minutes of five to let Grandpa in, and ten minutes later we both were awake, although simulating sleep when Frank arrived. I knew he was tired but he didn't give the slightest hint of it. He is remarkable.

When I left Lyle's house to go over to my maisonette for breakfast, with Grandpa trailing behind, as he always does in anticipation of his breakfast, too, I noticed that Pat was already in the fig trees with his little corps of colored boys, all busy as robbers in a cherry tree before the filling for the pies have been gathered.

Somehow breakfast tasted twice as good as ever before, and I lingered long over my coffee and cigarette in order to hear the newsbroadcast regarding the nomination of Roosevelt for a third term.

It was about 6:45 when Frank arrived with what he described as something Santa Claus wanted him to bring over to try on me. I was enchanted, as was he, and as was "Santa", although I regretted that the size was rather too large. Frank said he reckoned Santa would do something about that.

I got out a batch of mail before nine-thirty, when Aunt Cammie came to run through the incoming mail with me as we had mid-morning coffee together.

We labored together on the manuscript until eleven, when I made a little round of the side gardens with her, and then walked over to Felix Lorenz to get my perruque shorn. My progress along the highway towards the bridge delighted me for the atmosphere was very van Gogh in Arles, and the cotton stood high in endless rows on either side of the road, giving a lushness of greenery and opulence which in reality should, but unfortunately does not always characterize the Louisiana plantation, what with the scads of them that have passed into the hands of the big banks which somehow always impress a depleting and forlorn atmosphere about those which passed out of the hands of an individual and into the control of a corporation.

Across the bridge, and along the River to Felix's cabin, where I sat on the gallery for an hour half an hour talking Cane River gossip with him and Pearl, and so back to Elrose for dinner, a little late, but yet early enough, since Aunt Cammie and I always like to linger after all the rest have gone.

After dinner, Pat was working mightily on a bean shooter on which he had been working and which he wanted me to inspect. He also wanted to show me the new stiltz he had made that morning, and in truth I found them good. He demonstrated how one should walk on them, asking me if I should care to try. I said I would, and to my surprise succeeded in making a turn or two without breaking my neck on them. Frank happened to pass at that moment, and Pat asked him to try too, and so we all three did the rounds, exhibiting our grotesque postures to the delight of the on-lookers. He tried to entice Aunt Cammie to take a try on them, but she demurred, saying "You all will be the death of me anyway, so there's no need for me to break my neck on those things".



525

July 19th, - Friday.

We worked until three on the Diary, then after dessert, Aunt Cammie and I spread out the sacks of wool,--brown wool, on the back gallery to dry out in the sun. I think it had been str tched out there about 20 minutes when a dounpour opened up and Frank had to put all the wool back. Aunt Cammie declared that she was going to send it away for expert spinning immediately so that she might use it this fall for some of her own weaving.

Supper at five thirty, and after that much talk about dogs, for a guest had brought a female dachhund to mate with Feinzie, and the guest knew so much about dogs that I should have learned more than I did, if I hadn't noticed how skinny the product he brought turned out to be.

Pa spent an hour with me after supper at my house, after which we all joined Aunt Cammie in her room for a little chat until 8:30.

I gathered up Grandpa on my way home and so to Lyle's to work until about ten thirty, when I went to bed to sleep to wake up, to smoke a cigartette or two, and so to sleep. BTF.

526

July 20th, Saturday., 1940.

Another clear smooth dawn, when I awoke at 4:30, with a temperature so perfect that I felt quite unconscious of the existence of a thermometer, suggesting that the day would be hot.

When Frank arrived and tried to light a cigarette for me, we both realized how damp everything was, including the matches, in spite of a measure of freedom from a torrent her abouts during the night.

A little after six I had done with my bath and breakfast, and was headed down the Montrose lane. Just before reaching the Brevel le bayou.

A station wagon drew along side me, and stopping gently, the mulato driver asked me if I cared to ride a piece. I did, for ahead of me spread vast puddles of water and endless groves of mud that here and there spread to a width that encompassed the entire road. It was obvious that the downpour we had escaped at Melrose yesterday afternoon had come as close as this,--possibly half a mile, and evidently left all the tons of water at this stretch of the lane, so that Melrose proper had escaped.

I am sure I had never seen the boy before, but he seemed to know me, and together we talked about crops and conditions and fishing, and he told me that a couple of nights back he had been returning from town with his brother along the river road when they noticed an alligator some three or four feet long, lying parallel with the road and right in the center of it, and how they had stopped and loaded it on their running board, but now the reptile had somehow fallen off before they reached home.

At Montrose, we said goodbye, with the truck going southward while I took the cement road toward Natchez, Louisiana. Before I had gone far, however, a touring car drew along side me. It was Bill Jones who owns a large place up the river road beyond Zeline's and Madame Aubert-Roque's. I had heard Aunt Cammie speak of the Joneses often,--with the Attorneys and other distinguished Cane River gentry of color, the Joneses ranked among the first, and I believe it was Bill's father, Mathew, who left an estate of some quarter of a million when he died a few years ago. Beill has been operating the plantation since, although Bill himself seems quite young,--I presume in his early thirties.

Bill told me of his early education in New Orleans and in Chicago, and how he had given up college in order to assume direction of the plantation when his father died.

Before I knew it we were already in town, and shortly afterwards I said goodbye to Bill, transacted some Friday business on Saturday morning, and so headed back toward home, riding as far as Natchez with a boy I didn't know. From Natchez, La., I walked for several miles along the cement highway which was hot, thanks to a blazing sun and an absence of a breath of air. Cars swished by me going at



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~~August~~

going at a terrific speed, bringing in their wake a momentary tornado of miniscule dimentions, but in spite of these, water was soon coursing down my chest in little rivulets, and from my brow drops formed momentarily, running to my eye-lips from whence I discovered I could blow them off by twisiting my mouth in some curious & manner. It not only must have looked ridiculous, but it was practical, too, since it save me from getting an eye-full and at the same time obviated the necessity of moving my brow continuously.

After six or seven miles, I noticed from the reduced sound of speed the car ~~x~~ behind me was approaching, that it was going to stop, and a second later the door opened as it halted just beside me. It was Bill Jones returning home.

We talked of certain landmarks in the neighborhood, and Bill asked me if I knew anything about the old Natchez trace which crossed the cement highway at Natchez, Louisiana, just a short distance back up the road from whence we found ourselves at that moment. I told him that it was part of the old trail that ran from Mexico City to Nashville, Tennessee, passing through Natchez, Mississippi. Bill said ~~x~~ that was one place he always had wanted to see. He said that he was going over one day this coming week,--possibly Tuesday, and would I care to ride. I would. And said as much. And so it was agreed.

Back up the lane, as far as Bill's saloon at the bridgehead, where we had a drink which never tasted better to me, since I was still melting away. And so back to Melrose, Bill bringing me to the store.

Frank had seen me come in through the front gardens, and so by the time I had gone up to say goodmorning to Aunt Cammie, Frank was there with a tray of coffee and a glass of butter milk for me.

At a quarter of eleven, I returned to my house to knock off some mail before noon. But I didn't get far before Pat arrived, with four of the little colored boys who are his playmates and some times his assistants in fig-picking. Each boy had a big bunch of flowers for me, and I must say that the great bouquet of lotus flowers which Buddy Red Brown bore contrasted nicely with his balck skin,

One boy was sent to draw fresh water from the cistern, while another was busy rounding up vases from my mantle, the occasional tables, to., while a thirdserved by standing in the middle of the room just waiting, his arms piled high with all the prizes, while Pat pointed out the proper procedure. As Pat is eleven and his little friends are about fourteen, there is always something impressive about the way Pat issues orders as a matter of course,--but withal quite kind y, while the larger boys carry out every suggestion as though it were an edict from Sinai. My room was soon transformed into a veritable bower, after which I sent the boys scurrying off to the garage to buy ice cold cocacolas, while for myself I indulged in a prolonged and satisfying shower until I heard the dinner bell strike.

"Inner and the mail, which for some reason, hadn't been brought in before, and considerable disappointment on both Aunt Cammie's part and mine because there was no note from Robina regarding her plans for the week-end. After dinner, from one o'clock until three,

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July 20th - Saturday, - page 3.

Aunt Cammie dictated to me from the Wailes Diary, after which, I went from Lyle's to my house again to enjoy the fl wers and to bath again, after lemonade, what with all the hot weather.

A little before four, Pat knocked on my front door, while I was in the bath, saying Aunt Cammie wanted me to come over to see so ething I had never seen before. I gathered that Robina must have arrived. And presently I mounted the steps to the big house only to discover that she had.

We chatted gayly for a half hour, the while going hastily over the "ot Springs trip, and withal remarking upon the "bloom of Youth" which Aunt Cammie had assured me Robina carried away from the Spring with her. And Aunt Cammie, as I noticed, was quite right.

Robina strolled over to my house for a moment to see the new doors Henry and I had contrived since her last visit, and so back to the big house in the first sprinkles of a downpour that drenched me and washed out Pat's baseball game with his little colored friends. And so back to my house I treked, to peel off the damp clothes, have the last bath of the day, and so back to the big house for supper.

There was another terrific downpour during supper, but afterwards when we went up to Aunt Cammie's room, the sun brouke through as it was just slipping behind the horizon, and the promise for the morrow was brightened by a beautiful rainbow.

At eight we said goodnight, and I, with Grandpa in tow, retired to Lyle's house, where I labored at my typewriter until eleven

Et a la meme heure, le fils de mon domestique bien aime frapait a la porte. Chez Rita ce soir, il y avait une soiree a la creole. Le fils m'avait demande de l'argent ~~f~~ pour acheter quelquechose pour faire de punch.

And so, a little after eleven I was ready for bed to which Grandpa had already preceeded me, and to bed I went to sleep



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July 21st, - Sunday.

I awoke at four thirty and found it good just to lie in the great four pester and let my gaze wander over the nicely clipped lawn and the green and white flowing hedges which marked the far reaches of the white garden which glistened in the moisture of last night's downpour as it anticipated a rising sun which an intense blue sky already promised.

Five o'clock and almost five thirty before Frank arrived. With his good morning, I sensed that he wasn't happy. As he pour my coffee and lighted my cigarette I closed my eyes, in order that I might not seem to notice his shaking hand.

I had thought that he might have much to tell me this morning, and as it was the one day in the week when a million things aren't waiting for him to do, I asked him to sit down in a chair beside my bed and tell all.

It had been a difficult night and one that had caused him much regret, and probably a little embarrassment. Within half an hour after eleven o'clock last night, Tony had returned from Rita's party with his sister, May, and his boy friend and cousin, Noble Moran who was down for the week-end from Shreveport. None of them had had anything to drink.

Frank was in bed when they arrived, and was startled when he heard someone drive his fist through all the window panes on his little front gallery. Son fils ordered him to come out of the house and he would kill him. May accordingly bolted from the house, and I don't know what noble did. In any event, J. H. arrived shortly afterwards, having been summoned out of bed by May, and bulwarked by Whang, Terrance and one or two others, from whence he collected them I know not, he drove as far as the turn row leading across the cotton patch to Frank's house, summoned Tony and Frank, too. Neither one nor the other could explain such a performance, nor could the disturber of the peace. Tony accordingly was ordered into the car, driven about five miles toward the ~~XXXXXXXX~~ Hertzog plantation where his mother lives, and told not to return to Melrose and in no manner to ever annoy his Papa again.

Poor Frank was all up-set as is only naturel,--puzzled to think why his son should dislike him so and threaten death even when quite sober, tired by lack of sleep and worry, and probably as much humiliated that J. H. had to be pulled out of bed for such a reason. There were certain confidences we could share regarding the youth's activities during the past week and with these we could paste together a picture which was a little more intelligible to us both. For nearly an hour we talked, and somehow I felt that Frank, although more exhausted than when he arrived, at least was a little more at peace with himself and the world.

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And so eventually up and abroad, noticing Pat and his little colored boys already at work in the fig-trees, and so on to my house for a bath before breakfast.

After the seven o'clock news, I made a little tour of the gardens to see what would be nice for the day's bouquets and what would be good if left until the morrow for Robina to take home with her.

The rains of last evening hadn't been entirely absorbed as yet, and before eight I was back-home again, thoroughly soaked and ready for another bath, after which Robina came to see me, during which tete-a-tete, we tried to get caught up on all that had happened to us since last we were together. The coffee came at 10 o'clock, shortly after which Celeste arrived, giving me an opportunity to withdraw in order that they might speak for a few moments together, and so I ran over to the big house for a few moments to talk with Aunt Cammie, although my visit was brief, as Frances came shortly after I arrived and on her heels came sister with her baby and husband and all.

And so home to take off my long beard, and back again when I saw Robina in the garden and knew her caller had left.

We read for a time, and then responded to the dinner bell ushering in a repast which was anything but gay, and somehow I instinctively felt that Aunt Cammie was depressed about something. Probably someone has been after Frank's scalp in her immediate household. Sister wasn't in her usual form, either, feeling sick to her stomach and having given up cigarettes. She thought it might be ulcers of the stomach. I thought not.

Afternoon, and Robina and I retired to Lyle's house to await the end of a gentle drizzle, and so over to call on Zeline and Joe, having left the car at the saloon, for fear we might encounter the same bottomless gutters which had caused three cars to be pulled out by teams since last night's rain.

We found Zeline and Joe in good form, and of course enchanted to see Robina. We chatted on the front gallery, with Edward bring us fans, at Zeline's suggestion, so that we might use them for the breeze they created and to annoy the flies which were plentiful. Edward took me around in back of Zeline's old mud house to see the old, old log house which he thought Miss Post might like to photograph, and of course I thought so too. And so back down the river road to the saloon, into the car, and so across the bridge, and passed Melrose and down toward Derry for ice cream, passing by Magnolia Plantation, where we hesitated a few moments in order that Tony might come out to speak to us, during which brief conversation I told him I would not be able to see him for some time in the future. And so on to Derry and to Montrose



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at Montrose, and thence back down to Derry and up the river road, thus going twenty miles in the round trip,--possibly further, in order that we might avoid the ruts in the Melrose-Montrose lane which would have been but six miles round trip.

Back home, we discovered that we scarcely needed the 6 pints we had purchased, for Sister and her family were just leaving as we arrived, leaving only Pat, Aunt Cammie, Robina and I to enjoy our cream, which we didn't so much, since Aunt Cammie seemed so tired.

And so after half an hour, I suggested that each of us go our separate ways until six o'clock, --Robina reading her newspaper, Aunt Cammie doing a round in the garden and me doing a lot of little odds and ends at my house while Pat went to resume his game of base ball with his little colored friends.

Supper at six, and fairly quiet, for I had neuralgia, and cared only for liquids, and an avocado.

Afterwards, we retired to Aunt Cammie's room, with a few moments of radio listening in the news department, and shortly afterward Aunt Cammie went to bed on the sleeping porch, while Robina read to me until eight from Winston Churchill's autobiography, which I liked much but should have enjoyed more if I could have only concentrated a little more.

Before leaving, I spoke of the whiskey in Aunt Cammie's armoir, but try as we might, neither Robina nor I could open the doors which obviously had been swelled by the dampness. And so I said good night, running over to J. H.'s in hopes of getting a drink, but of course, found the house dark. And so, it being eight thirty, I decided I would walk for a little piece, and although the evening was lovely and many people flitted like shadows along the road, I failed to see anyone I knew,--I suppose because I was too busy aching about my neuralgia. Fortunately, J. H. came along with Celeste in the Lincoln, and recognizing me in the dark, they picked me up, brought me back to their house, gave me plenty of bourbon, and immediately I thought I felt better, although I didn't go to sleep until after one o'clock, although I did my best from nine o'clock on.

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July 22nd, Monday.

Up at five, anticipating Frank's arrival by ten minutes, and after coffee, over to my house for a prolonged shower before breakfast.

The dawn was heavy with a dew dripping from heaven to earth with a golden haze staggering through the cloud-banks.

I rounded up an armful of dahlias, parked them on the cistern and so up to Aunt Cammie's room where I found that she and Robina had just done with their breakfasts, and Robina ready to start for the report.

I rode with her a ways, driving slowly up the east bank of Cane River, and talking the while of hundreds of things we hadn't covered yesterday.

Some three miles up the river, we said goodbye, and I started back toward Melrose. It was still not hot, and the fog banks curtailed the more direct rays of the sun.

After half a mile or so, I met a colored boy in the road and asked him if he knew any place I could cross the river near that point. He told me he knew of a boat hard by, and offered to row me across. I was glad to accept.

The river's surface was like glass and under the expert boatmanship of this Cane River gondolier, we skimmed through the carpet of lily pads and lotus flowers quickly and so out into the center of the water, and again through the flowery carpet to the other side. I had a little trouble finding the road that parallels the river on the West side, for at this particular spot it seems to be perhaps a half mile from the river and apparently turning in such a manner as to make one uncertain whether to turn south or continue straight west. I passed by a corn field and an endless cotton patch, half a dozen negro cabins, and eventually landed precisely at an impasse before a nice old mud house. A mulatto woman wearing an imposing tignon, seemed surprised to find a stranger suddenly appearing from the fields at such an hour of the day, but she was kind and directed me through a maze of hedgerows which lead me to the river road in ten minutes.

I followed the river road, sometimes very close to the edge of the water, and sometimes some distance from it. I have traveled this road often in a car, going from the saloon at the bridgehead at Melrose up by Zelines, Madame Aubert Coque's, etc., along to Bermuda and La Cote Joyeuse, but never before had I realized what a pleasant road it was, made doubly so by the friendly darkies I encountered all along the way.

I stopped for a moment at Bill One's house, chatted with him for a moment to confirm the flight into Mississippi tomorrow, and so on down the road for a couple of miles as far as Zeline's where I stopped, all a-drip, to talk with her and Joe for a few moments and labor mightily with a big palmetto fan.



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July 22nd, - Monday, - page 2.

A little before nine I continued on down the road, chatting for a moment with the postman who came along in his car going in the same direction as I. He was kind enough to ask me to ride but I declined with thanks.

A few minutes later a nice mulatto boy came along on a mule, also headed in the same direction as I. I discovered that it was easy to keep abreast with the mule, and chatting with the rider shortened the distance to the bridge. He remarked that although the roads had dried up now, the ruts were still a distinct handicap for trucks, automobiles and wagons, remarking that it was a pity the State couldn't at least put in a gravel surface, since the road served so many tax payers. He said he reckoned nothing would be done about it however since everyone who lived on the road was not white, and probably the State didn't care whether the road was good or bad. I regret to say that his observation seemed perfectly sound to me.

We had a beer at the saloon and ten minutes later I was home, discarding my dripping clothes and enjoying my second prolonged shower of the day.

Coffee with Aunt Cammie at 10, and afterward to my typewriter until twelve.

Dinner and afterward the mail which took but a few moments, and then to my typewriter again to take down dictation from the Diary from Aunt Cammie until three, when after our lemonade, Aunt Cammie took her siesta and I walked over to ~~visit~~ Zeline's to chat with her for a while about the "rudhomme's" and "etoyers."

She spoke of Jean Baptiste "rudhomme" who used to live in the big black house just behind Jean "rudhomme's" house where we had all been to tea some weeks back,--the "elrose people, but not Zeline, of course. She said Jean Baptiste had two families, one white and one "Creole" as she delicately put it, meaning colored. The colored children, she explained, were by a slave in the prudhomme family, and one of the off-spring of the extra-marital union was Aspasia "rudhomme" whose tombstone I had seen so often in the "elrose cemetery.

She also spoke of one young lady on Cane River, not far from Bermuda whose name was Emeline "ettoyey". Further down the River there lived another young woman, but mulatto, by the same name. One day the young white woman received a letter addressed to Emeline "ettoyey" which she discovered on reading was intended for the Emeline of color. The young white person took the matter up with her father, saying that she thought the woman of color should be forced to change her name. Her father told her he thought that would be rather unfair since the "Emeline" of color had received her name a few months earlier than his daughter by the white mother had brought the second "Emeline" into the world.

Back home for supper at five thirty,--a shower and so to supper with reading afterward until eight when we said goodnight and I retired to Lyle's and fell into bed at nine.

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July 23rd, - Tuesday.

Up at five for a hurried cup of coffee and so over to my house for a shower before Frank had brought me my breakfast before six o'clock.

By six thirty, I had chatted for a moment with Aunt Cammie and headed down the road where I found Bill "one's" awaiting me at the saloon. The day was in duplication of yesterday so far as fairness and warmth went, and I was glad to anticipate a cool breeze as we drove toward Mississippi.

The condition of the crops in the vast plantations that sweep for miles along the west side of the Mississippi were appalling. In spite of the fact that this soil is about the finest in the world, the crops were disheartening and obviously already fore-told disaster for many a planter in this area. The cotton was not a third as tall as in the Cane River area, and most of it a sickly green, and in many places almost hidden by rank weeds which had over grown the cotton, since the constant downpours of the past weeks had made it impossible for the field hands to hoe. It was still "too wet for the ladies to hoe", for row after row and mile after mile of these fields were still supporting little canals between each cotton row. The corn was stubby and the color of straw with vast splotches from plintation to plantation where ~~never~~ corn grew at all.

As we approached the "river, we noticed that the approaches for the Natchez bridge are being completed, and they say the bridge itself will be opened in another couple of months. I was glad that we still must use the Ferry, for the approach by the river through Natchez Under The Hill always gives a feeling of uniqueness to this remarkable bluff city.

We drove down to Longwood and Saragasso, and I stopped in town to chat with Jeff "amudin" and made an unsuccessful effort to contact "agrunder" Drake.

After we drove out to see the old Slave Hospital, and look at the sturdy building where the 210 darkies burned up in the night club it is Spring,--and so out Pine Street beyond the ruins of "omewood, and so to Jeff's plantation store at Pine Ridge whence I telephoned Mary in hopes of being able to drop by for a little chat, but I could get a call through and accordingly assumed she might not be feeling very well.

And so on to Washinton, Miss., Church Hill, Windsor, Port Gibson,--to show Bill the "Hand of God" on the Church steeple and thence to Vicksburg where we crossed the Mississippi over into Louisiana again, and so to Tallulah, Monroe, etc., and back to "elrose by a quarter past mid-night. I picked up Grandpa at my house and so across the moon flooded garden to Lyle's house, where I found Aunt Cammie had banked in bouquets of lotus flowers, huge bouquet of regal and confederate lilies, white dahlias, etc., etc., with all the house having been done over during my absence,--summer mattings on the floors to replace the winter rugs, fresh draperies, etc. My bed was turned down and I fell in it, tired but enchanted with a good day which had ended so pleasantly.



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*July*  
August 24th, Wednesday.

It was a short night, for I didn't awaken until Frank arrived a little after five.

As always after an absence of a whole day, we had much to exchange by way of little confidences.

I dressed leisurely, the better to enjoy all the innovations which Aunt Cammie had instituted during my absence on the other side of the river and to contemplate in daylight the beautiful combinations of white flowers which she had united to form such luscious bouquets.

Breakfast and afterwards a flock of mail before nine when the postman came and when Aunt Cammie came over to see me.

It's odd how long a separation can seem when in reality it may be but a day.

After dinner we resumed our labors on the Wailes Diary, and broke off only at four when a flock of Pilgrims stormed the place and we divided the tour in order to hustle them out the sooner. They were uninteresting people whom I piloted who would have done better to have brought their fishpools and stopped at the bridge rather than waste their time in looking at old plantation which obviously meant nothing to them either spiritually or intellectually. It always puzzles me how and why people of this particular bent jockey themselves in to pilgrimages of this sort. They must either anticipate a lot of excitement which never comes up to their expectations or else they are somehow forced into the tour by someone who feels it is one of the things one should do.

Supper at five thirty and afterward a couple of hour reading when at eight we said good night.

Grandpa was waiting for me on the back gallery of the big house, and accordingly trailed behind me across the moon-flooded garden to Lyle's picketed garden, and so in the house and to sleep.

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July 25th  
Thursday,

Up and stirring about before Frank arrived at five.

Banged off a couple of letters before six o'clock when I went over to my house, fed my animals, and after bathing fell to with vigor on the ample breakfast tray awaiting me. I am glad that figs are in order these days for ripe figs and cream go a long ways in getting the day started on the right track.

Between six and seven, I was in the big road, swinging down the Montrose lane, and enjoying the coolness of the fresh morning air.

I traveled far and the sun was hot, with a slight breeze to keep air in circulation but not enough to help blot away the water that oozed from every pore.

Almost to town, Harold came along in the garage car, and stopped to ask if I did care to ride. I did, and together we returned to Melrose via Bermuda and the River road, stopping but once for a cold cocacola. I noticed the fine water-melons which the man had ~~xxx~~ along the counter, and inquired the price. The small ones were 15 cents and the large ones a quarter. I was impressed as I remembered paying \$.75 and \$1.25 in New York for the same type last year.

Back home by a little after ten, I had coffee with Aunt Cammie, working from then until 12 on mail which I had left unfinished in yesterday's out-going basket.

The afternoon passed swiftly with Aunt Cammie dictating from old diaries, interrupting only long enough from time to time to remark a parallel between the information revealed in these ante-bellum notes and facts which her mother, born in 1840, recounted to her for years before her death in 1935. There were other interruptions, too,--little ones, as servants came by for orders covering this point or that, although once a telegram came through to say that Lyle would be up from New Orleans this evening.

Before supper, fresh covers had made their appearances on the upholstered, over-stuffed furniture in Lyle's house and the original curtains, newly laundered, were backing in their places, hung with abandon by Sam Brown and Henry, neither of whom, I am sure, had the vaguest notion as to why the opening should have two draperies at each window and door when a single one would surely have covered the opening. The combinations accordingly were curious, and needed considerable changing before the bath room curtain with its red border was unscrambled from the white borders on the library, and the wide draperies were untangled from the narrow.



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July 25th, - Thursday. page 2.

When evening settled down, Aunt Cammie and I made a little tour of the gardens, gathering large bouquets to supplement those already distributed lavishly about Lyle's house, and with these in place and everything in order, we went to the big house to read until eight, after which Aunt Cammie retired, and I worked at my typewriter in my house until nearly ten o'clock, when I thought I would listen to the radio for a few minutes before Lyle arrived.

Clemence had had to go down to her house at Derry in the evening and Aunt Cammie had sent her down in the Estate car, with her son-in-law, Emmet, Davis, Clyde, or whatever, with instructions to pick up Mr. Lyle at Derry when the train arrived from New Orleans at 10:10.

I must have ~~xx~~ fallen asleep at my radio, for the radio faded and the next thing I knew, Clyde Davis Emmett or whatever was standing before my sofa,--blacker than Egypt, and softly saying: "Mr. Francois, Mr. Lyle is home".

I accordingly bestired myself, crossed the garden to Lyles, and found him awaiting me,--with al quite tired, but as always ready for conversation at this hour of the night.

We ran through a hundred things, sometimes going over them two or three times, but without registering the repetitions. About 2:30 I said goodnigh under protest, and so back home and to sleep my my house for the first time in ever so long.

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July 26th, Friday.

Frank arrived so early this morning,--at five o'clock, although I suppose it was the brevity of sleep that made morning come so soon.

I was tired, so tired that I didn't even want a cigarette for the first time in my life.

But by six, I had bathed and breakfasted, and by the time I was in the big road, I felt as fit as a fiddle and lots of places to play.

I walked until nearly eleven, and so h me to a nice long cool shower, and after hearing news broadcasts, we at the board when the rest o the plantation ~~xx~~ responded to the call of the dinner bell. It was a good dinner, and conversation was as good as Lyle and Aunt Cammie could make it, which is something even in spite of definite and determined silence from one angle of the board.

After dinner, I took Lyle to see the new color arrangements in the glass in my house, and afterward, we retired to his house to spend the afternoon reading and from his Lafitte which I found most excellently done. I find his humor, his clarity and his nicety of choice in balancing just enough detail with imagination constitute vital elements that make for success in his writing.

About three, Frank arrived with lemonade, and by slight of hand transformed them into whiskyssness "sauers". Aunt Cammie joined us at five, and together we chatted until supper, after which we accompanied her to her room where we chatted until 9:30.

At with us and asked Lyle to tell him a story. Lyle did so thus: "Once there was a little girl who was oh, so good! She won medles for never being late for school, for never missing Sunday school, for doing all sorts of things that a really nice little girl would do. One day she wandered into the King's garden, and a v ry remarkable garden it was, too. She was entranced, while passing by some bushes to see some little pigs on the toher side of the hedge,--nice neat little pigs, and of all things, what do you think they were doing? They were planting flowers, raking the lawns, and pruning the trees. About thid time the little girl heard a swish of a broomstick, and from behind the hedge, she saw an old witch st aling up on the little pigs. The little girl was so frightened at what might happen to these nice little pigs, that she began shaking a'l over with fear, and she shook so hard that the medles she had received for being so good, and always wore on her dress began chinking back and forth together, and the old witch, hearing the sound, came around the otherside of the hedge and ate the little girl up.



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August 26th, Friday, page 3.

Fat seemed a little non-plused by the unexpected termination of the tale, but didn't ask for the moral, which was better, perhaps, and so after another round or two of such foolishness, we said goodnight to Aunt Gammie, picked up a generous dish of ice on our way through the kitchen, and so over to Lyle's.

There was much to be talked about, reminiscences, recitation of local doings, etc., etc., and so the hours ticked off until after two, when a little under the weather, I said good night and went home alone, leaving Grandpa, to Lyle's enchantment, to stay with him, as of old.

540

July 27th, Saturday, 1940.

Morning came again plenty early, but feeling less noble than yesterday, I didn't determine upon a walk.

I breakfasted leisurely, and banged off some work on my typewriter before 7:30, when I bathed, and then decided to lie down again for a few minutes.

Just nicely stretch out under the oscillating electric fan, a knock came at my door, and pulling the sheets up over my head, I cried: "Come in,"--and to my surprise in walked Aunt Gammie.

It is extraordinary for her to go calling so early in the morning, and I don't which of us was the more surprised to find her up and abroad on social calls so early.

She explained that Joe had driven up from Beaumont, Texas, to see his boy, Fat, and that she thought she would be having a full day, and accordingly would come over for a brief call while the household was still comparatively quiet. She sat down for half an hour on the sofa, and from my bed I bounced back what conversation I could muster up, although I must say I felt painfully old and neuralgia was rumbling on one side of my face.

A little after nine, Aunt Gammie ran along, and I turned over with a view to going to sleep for a little while again. Of course, Lyle is the one with sense, for sitting up half the night, he sleeps until 11:30 in the morning, but I like a fool always am getting up at the crack of dawn regardless of how much sleep I haven't had before that magical moment.

9:30 and another tap at the door. It was,--of all people,--little short curiously contrived Bud Williams, the gardener. He said he had come for my breakfast tray. Heaven knows why he had, for I am sure it's the first time in his life any one ever ~~sent~~ him for it. "Alright," I muttered vaguely, and thought I might now actually sleep away the neuralgia, admonishing him that in the strange event that he should be delegated to serve coffee in about 15 minutes or half an hour, I, for one, wanted none. He said alright, and I turned over to sleep,--I thought. A few minutes passed and I almost dozed when sensing someone in the room I looked up, and to my astonishment, there stood Bud Williams again. He cringingly remarked that since I didn't want any coffee, he had just brought me buttermilk, and would I take it in bed or should he put it on the side table. I didn't care where he put it, and asked him not to come back for the tray.

Half an hour later, possible 15 minutes, another invasion,--this time it was Fat, asking me if I had anything for him and his coterie of dusky youths to do for me. I hadn't, nor did I have any hopes of getting any rest that morning, and so begrudging Lyle of his ability to sleep until mid-day, I got up and dressed and worked until the dinner bell struck at noon.



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July 27th, Saturday, page 2. - 1940.

Dinner was good in a way, with Joe doing his best at humor and Lyle and Aunt Cammie holding down their end of the board with determination, but still a vast silence emanating from one place, giving a hollow quality to everything said at table.

After dinner, Lyle and I resumed our reading, and so passed the hour between dinner and tea, when Frank arrived and fixed drinks for us all round, and so the afternoon went on, with drinks tasting better and better, and yet the neuralgia becoming more pronounced in spite of my attempts to draw it with liquor.

Aunt Cammie came back to Lyle's with us after supper, and sipped at iced cocoa-cola while Lyle and I began on another round of whiskey. Celeste joined us a little before eight, to sit until her husband came home from a bank meeting or something of the sort.

My face pained me so much, I excused myself for a moment, taking my drink with me, and going over to my house, thinking if I sat in the dark and relaxed completely on my sofa for fifteen or twenty minutes, I might, thanks to the liquor and relaxation, snap out of the pain.

I more than rested my eyes, for the moment I awoke and lighted my light, the clock seemed to say ten minutes past eleven. I wondered if Aunt Cammie and Celeste could still be at Lyle's, but then, on second glance I noticed that in reality the hands pointed to ten minutes ~~xxxxxxx~~ five minutes of two, and I accordingly decided that it would be as well to slide out of my clothes and slip into bed, which I did.

542

July 28th, 1940 - Sunday.

Up at six this morning, with quite a long chat with Frank who lingered by my bedside while I had a second cup of coffee, there were some many things which had happened in and about the plantation while I had slept my life away last night.

After breakfast, I made a round of the gardens, gathering a tremendous bouquet of dahlias in a thousand different pastel shades, and placing them in an early American glass tumbler of ample magnitude, I sent them over to Lyle by Frank.

I then called on Aunt Cammie, by way of catching her before her several family blew in, and at the same time return her early morning call of yesterday. I wanted to apologize, too, for having faded out of the picture so unexpectedly last night. She was noble, as always, about such things, and said she was perfectly delighted that I had sense enough to withdraw and fall asleep without knowing I was going to. She's really remarkable.

A little before ten, Frank brought coffee, and afterward, with members of the family arriving, I withdrew, while Frank, catching me on the staircase, whispered that Mr. Lyle was awake and would be glad if I would cover over to take coffee with him.

I did. And was enchanted to find him feeling all right at this comparatively early hour. He remarked that he had come to pay his respects to me last night, but had found me so profoundly asleep that he had not aroused me, but rather had gone on to other things, and had learned that I was the object of admiration from one source or another from angles I never dreamed of. We all laughed together, and fell to talking about our favorite topic, the colored people hereabouts. While in the midst of this, Henry arrived with his little boy, to show Mr. Lyle how much Joseph had grown, and when he had gone Clemence arrived with her ward, -- Mary's child, -- who was now a big girl, it seemed. I suppose she was eight possibly, and withal quite self-possessed and ready with responses to questions asked her regarding her age, whether she went to school, etc., etc.

Sister arrived shortly thereafter, and I accordingly withdrew, giving her and Lyle and chance to talk a little alone. Surely she would want to be alone to tell him that at last she had made up her mind that she was again pregnant, and a hundred and one other things.

Dinner at noon, and much talk about war, and heaven knows what with the same element of hollowness dominating the board, and afterward an inspection of Rayne's new Mercury with Lyle and Joe. Lyle told us a rather gay story while on our way back to the house:



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Sunday, July 28th - page 2.

The story ran thus:

Mrs. Joe Smith died a widow, and arriving at the nearly Gates, she told Saint Peter she hoped she might find her husband in "heaven."

St. Peter explained that there were millions of Joe Smiths in "heaven," and that she must describe him, not forgetting that physical features on earth weren't of value in such descriptions in Heaven where only the traits of the individuals were noted.

Mrs. Smith said that one characteristic of her husband had been his admonition to her before he died that if she ever carried on with another man after he was dead, he would turn over in his grave.

"Ah," responded St. Peter immediately. "certainly I know your husband. Up here we call him Whirling Joe."

Early in the afternoon, Pat and his father had a little chat together, and then Joe departed for Beaumont, after explaining to Pat that he and Pat's mother, Eugenia, had divorced and that he would be back to Elrose again for him to take him back to Texas late in August to spend the winter with Eugenia's parents near Brownsville.

Lyle and I read all the afternoon, and after supper, Aunt Cammie came over to sit with us for a while until after nine. Lyle and I mixed up a new flock of drinks, talked on a variety of subjects, walked a little, spoke with a mutual friend for a while, and so until mid-night, when I said goodnight, and so fell into my downy couch.

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July 29th, 1940 . Monday.

Five o'clock and again a little surprised to find myself in bed in my house.

Being far behind on my mail, I work mightily until nine o'clock when I had a neat pile of it ready for the out-going post, and withal enchanted to receive a number of good letters, some of which were almost in answer to those which I had just posted.

There was one from Mary Ambdin, written from the Baptist Hospital, advising us that while traveling in the northern part of Mississippi, she had called on an old friend of the family, a physician, who had bounced her off to the hospital, but for what exact reason she wasn't sure, although she expected she would not remain there long, and hoped to be back to "atchez, and thence to Elrose to see her new loom shortly thereafter.

Both Aunt Cammie and I decided that we would get her off letters in the next mail,--and after that we went on to mail that had come from "anhattan,--some of which confused me a little, but I didn't remark upon it, as I felt that letters from Aunt Cammie might have contained something which would be just as well not to inquire about, since it seemed to be revealed only in part by the letters she was reading.

For the balance of the morning, we worked on Diaries, and at dinner, Lyle made things the merrier by his fund of stories which are always of the first order, and twice as good as any one's else because of the humor,--sometimes almost Rabelaisian, which gives them a spice and a slide which is unique.

I recall one story, which wasn't especially funny but which struck me very forcibly.

One news item of which Lyle spoke interested me particularly, as it concerned a young lady I had once met in New Orleans.

It seems her mother had been a very beautiful woman and her father a rather unpleasant looking man. There were two children of this union, the boy taking on the handsome features, seemingly having come from his mother, while the girl, although pretty, was dissatisfied with the appearance of her nose. She was told by physicians that by a slight operation, requiring but a few moments, this matter could be corrected, she went with her mother to the hospital a month or two back to have the surgeon make the proper adjustment. Her mother was asked to wait in an adjoining room and that the minor attention would be taken care of in a few moments and she and her daughter could go on together. In the Dr.'s office the young lady was seated in a chair and a local anesthetic injected into her nose. She suddenly gasped that she couldn't breathe, and fell out of the chair dead. All kinds of stimulants, such as adrenalin, etc., were applied as were oxygen and artificial respirators, but the girl, in reality was dead. A few minutes later, the girls



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A few moments later, a nurse entered the waiting room where the girl's mother was glancing through a magazine. Looking up, and seeing the nurse, the girl's mother remarked:

"Well, that was really over before I had expected."

Surely it must have been difficult for the poor nurse to explain how tragically this minor operation had turned out.

Lyle and I spent the afternoon as yesterday, reading and drinking as the rain cascaded down outside. After supper Aunt Cammie and Pat, Lyle and I chatted until 8:30, after which Lyle and I talked of various and unpredictable matters until after one o'clock and so to bed.

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July 30th, Tuesday.

Frank arrived a little before five, and said that Mr Lyle was already up, and would be ready to start for the train shortly, as we would drive ten miles or so to Derry where the train is scheduled to stop about six o'clock.

I had a cup of coffee, bathed and dressed, and was waiting in the big house for Lyle, in spotless linen appeared with Frank, who took us to the car awaiting us in front of the store.

Jake Contee, the 20 year old off-spring of Puny and Masseline drove us down. Mists and vapors hovered along the smooth surface of the river, while from chimneys of little cabins along the route smoke curled up from late morning breakfasts.

At Derry we were the only human being in sight. Derry, at best isn't a vast place,--I believe the railroad station, an old gin and a commissary constitute the whole place.

The train appeared to be late, and before long, Mrs. Murphy, the agent, arrived, being driven by her husband. We spoke with her about various local nothings. A large car drove up to the station. One of the two rather nicely

dressed men inquired if there would be an apartment in town they could rent. Mrs. Murphy didn't know of any. They asked if there was more to Derry than what they say surrounding thme. Mrs. Murphy declared that this was Derry proper. Lyle and I wondered where the suburbs might begin.

At quarter of seven the train arrived, and Lyle was on his way back to New Orleans., while Jake and I headed back up the River road.

Back home, my breakfast tray was waiting for me, and I finished it off with dispatch, and so betook myself to the big road, for an extended walk, although it was hot and I was tired.

About ten, while awaiting at the turn in the road, some 20 miles from Melrose, a fine big car stopped, and a woman's voice called out: "Francois, whatever are you doing here.? Don't you want to ride with me, I'll be glad to drive you to Melrose."

I was enchanted to accept, and so chatted with one of the Mrs. Friedman of Natchez, La., who took me all the way home at a spanking pace.

Aunt Cammie and I worked on the Diary for the rest of the mornin', but after the mail came we did little more than talk



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July 30th, 1940 Tuesday, - page 2.

In the mail had come a letter from Mary Ambdin, telling us that she was leaving the Memphis Hospital that day, en route to Edgewood, where her father, Mr. Henderson, had died during her stay at the hospital.

He has been so unhappy these past few months, always wanting to leave lovely Edgewood to go back to his old home at Greenwood where he would have few of the attentions which are lavished on him at Mary's home, and this determination on his part, plus the care that goes along with an invalid, must have been a considerable drain on Mary's good health. I am glad both for father and daughter that this hopeless situation has been terminated.

I shall at the always be so thankful to have know Mr. Henderson who along with Miss Corinne and a few others are the last links we have with those old times and people who made Natchez, and for my preparation of the work on Jallon, I shall always be indebted to Mr. Henderson for his kindness in detailing the appearance of the old Foster home where the rice served as a slave. I suppose Mr. Henderson was the last living person who remembered the interior and exterior appearance of this remarkable old home.

Dinner and afterward, both Aunt Cammie and I took a little siesta, for Aunt Cammie had much on her mind to exhaust her, while my accumulation of shortened hours of sleep, plus my morning in the big road in the blazing sun, made me a little sleepy, too.

At two thirty, Frank came with lemonade, and after working for a while with Aunt Cammie, I got in the ~~big~~ road, to take a turn around to see Zeline, whom I found on her front gallery, filled with as many amusing tales as ever.

Back home for supper, Aunt Cammie and I pursued Sydnor and Mississippi Slavery until 8 o'clock.

I had intended to say, too that I had seen Edward, and he had asked about Lyle's children of strangers, and where he could buy a volume. I must ask Aunt Cammie if there are extra copies about the house. I am wondering how a mulatto will enjoy the story? I imagine he will find it good, and possibly twice as entertaining as one who might not live on the scene where the novel was laid, as it was at Melrose,-- or Yucca, as the place used to be called before old Mr. Henry lost his mind over Sir Walter Scott.

It was a delicious evening, and I didn't sleep early, thanks to my siesta, but it was pleasant not to.

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July 31st, - 1940. - Wednesday.

From hot humid sunny weather to hot humid rainy weather, for it was pouring when Frank arrived.

I staid in all day, working at my machine, and doing Diary with Aunt Cammie,--concentrating on the years 1855.

Aunt Cammie and I worked all morning together, and in the afternoon, while she rested, I got caught up on some of my work which had been neglected during the past week-end. Sam Brown and Frank were working in Lyle's house a part of the afternoon, wiping away spots of mildew which the excessive dampness of this sweltering season had brought about. It was astonishing how easily pure vinegar removed this growth, leaving the white paint as spotless as though it were new.

When Frank left to serve coffee, Sam fell to talking about Church, and how much he enjoyed the revivals they were having up at St. Mathew's Church along the river on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday nights of this week.

He said that Tuesday's meeting had been fine, and that one youth, - Spirit,--had been converted that evening, although a group of youths after the meeting had persuaded him that he had been short sighted in "jine-in". Sam hoped, however, that Thursday night's meeting would be more successful, and said that it would be better than Saturday night's meeting because on Saturday night too many of the church-goers would stop at one of the two saloons some quarter of a mile distant from the church and they wouldn't be so receptive for "de Lord" as they would on Thursday night when none of them would have money to stop at the saloons.

I asked him about St. Mary's church back on the Bayou where Elam Brown's funeral was to be held some weeks back but was prevented because of the excessive downpours on the scheduled day. He said that there'd be meetings at St. Mary's for prayer and revival about the middle of the month when the moon was out again and folks could see to get there and get home again through the woods. This would be held after the meetings at St. Paul's Church up Bermuda way had been concluded. Here at St. Paul's they hold the yearly "So-Sayshon". I wasn't acquainted with the "So-Sayshon", but learned from Sam that it had something to do with meetings designed to collect money for some sort of frolic, and that it wasn't very popular. From the layman's view point, although it seemed popular enough with certain deacons and preachers who reaped certain monetary returns from any moneys that were turned in. I asked him, too, about the possible date of Elam Brown's funeral services, but he said he could say. Next Sunday, - a week after the Baptising at St. Mathew's, St. Mary's would have Home-Coming Day, and may be the next Sunday night to for the Brown requiem, but he didn't know if people could find anything "noble to say about Elam".



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[1940]

August 1st, - Thursday.

It was good to awaken a little before five this morning. I couldn't have said as much earlier in the week when the disapation of the week-end still sat heavily upon my brow, but now I seem to have caught up with rest again, and mornings once more are the hour for rising.

The mail that I accumulated before the postman arrived spoke of a return to normalcy also, for I had batted out half a dozen two page pieces well before nine, after which Aunt Cammie came to dictate to me until 11 o'clock, save for half an hour when Celeste dropped in for 10 o'clock coffee.

The incoming mail was curious, much of it seeming at cross-purposes. For example, Aunt Cammie and I had both sent letters in the out-going mail to Mary Lambdin who had written us the day before from the Baptist Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. In the incoming post, arriving just as ours left, another letter from Mary announced that her father, Mr. Henderson, had died at Edgewood in Natchez, and that she was at that moment en route for Pine Ridge. Then, too, there was a letter from Kenneth, inviting me over to Texas for later in the season, and in the same mail another letter from someone on the Atlantic seaboard, saying how ~~ixx~~ impossible it was to get a word out of Texas in regard to a purposed visit to that State.

Aunt Cammie and I fixed that one up, too.

The food quality of dinner was good, and afterward I took a siesta until after 2, when suddenly I awakened as Joe Peace stood before me, holding out a pint of ice cream, and saying "the Madam sent it".

Without my shirt, I retired to the front gallery of Lyle's house where I had been resting, and there on the old church bench in the cool breeze, Joe and I shared the ice cream, finishing just as Frank arrived with lemonade.

Aunt Cammie arrived shortly afterward, and so we labored at diary and machine until nearly supper time.

Some time back, I had promised Pat I would take him to St. Mathew's colored church up Cane River one of these nights when they are having revival meetings. Tonight seemed to be a good one, and accordingly, after dinner, he bathed early, and I found him sitting in Aunt Cammie's room after supper, looking as new-washed and spick and span as any youth of 11 summers,--his hair carefully combed, fresh blue shirt, long white trousers, and new sport shoes. He smiled and went on reading Tarzan while Aunt Cammie and I pursued our course in Dr. Sydnor's Slavery in Mississippi until 7:30 or a quarter to eight.

All day the sky had been curtain with clouds, but as we left the big house, we noticed a streak of scarlet breaking through the cloud-banks on the western horizon. One of Pat's

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August 2nd,--Thursday, page 2.

little colored friends saw us coming out the front garden, and he accordingly joined us as he headed up the river road, for he, too, was spick and span, and of course intent on attending the service.

It was half-dark before we were half way to the church, which is probably some two or three miles from Melrose, but the night seemed to grow less obscure as it deepened, thanks to a clearing away of the clouds and the gradual appearance of first the major and then the minor heavenly constellations.

From the lights of automobiles that passed us from time to time, we could see that there were people some distance ahead of us, obviously he ded toward the same destination as we, while behind in the distance, too, an occasional velvety peal of laughter in the dark hinted that other Baptists were intent on the same mission.

Two bicycles passed us headed up the road, too, and a gray horse, galloping at full tilt likewise passed by, its rider a buxom colored woman in a white dress which flapped its starched flounces noisily as she flew ~~xxxx~~ past.

After walking for half an hour further, we turned sharply to the left down an unfrequented side road, running two or three hundred ~~xxxx~~ yards toward Cane River, near the bank of which huddled little St. Mathews in amid-night shadow of trees. From its windows faint rays of lights from a couple of oil lampsshimmered through the darkness, made more intense by the faint outline of figures in white,--or more correctly,--the garments but not the figures of darkies moving beneath the trees, lolling against the old rail fence or lolling along the grass covered turn-row. From within the church seeped a wail of dissonant harmonies, interspersed with occasional shouts of "Jesus" and "I'se gwine to see my Mammy".

As we moved darkly through these indistinct conglomeration of shapes and shade, certain voices spoke to us, and in speaking recorded their identity on the ear which the sight had been unable to record. Like great dusky moths, be-sprinkled with patches of white, these figures were those of young men, seemingly in their early 20's, although only that morning I had seen them as little boys in overalls, jumping about the fragile limes of the fig trees, gathering the ripening fruit under little Pat's orders. Their appearance and manner, shrouded in the encircling gloom had somehow metamorphosed them into individuals of maturity, and it suddenly struck me how little we know of the world when we know it and its people only by the noonday sun.



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August 1st,

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It would be difficult to judge how many darkies were thus silently milling round outside the church,--but roughly I would guess at least 50 or more,--for the most part men and young men, few of them speaking with each other save for an occasional recognition. In one they they seemed like speechless centaurs, aimlessly moving about toward some abstract spot, motivated by an inner urge that rose uncertainly from sex, yet withal so muted and at the same time so vibrant that almost anything might happen or be happening just beyond the circle of a foot or two beyond one where darkness made obscurity absolute.

Strangely enough St. Mathew's, a small wooden building, has its pulpit nearest the road, so that in order to enter the building one must go around the church and so turn back toward the road. We went up a little flight of uncertain plank steps,--Pat, Johnny Buddy, Joe and I. The chanting from within had stretched out into a wail and thence into elongated into a spiritual. In the uncertain light, originating from two coal oil lamps at the far end of the room where a little elevation made the dais, stood one of the deacons, blacker than Egypt, and yet glistening in the sweat which bathed his face. Down either side of the aisle which ran through the center of the building ranged rows of benches, partially filled by men and women of color, with shirt sleeves noticeable in the subdued rays of the lamps.

We found seats in the back row, and sat for perhaps for five minutes while the spiritual ran on through endless choruses, its cadence rising and falling in sympathy to the enthusiasm of the more lusty voices whose voices would sometimes surge forth in a mounting volume at some word or phrase the moved them with fervor, and then almost die out through indifference when the words became less inspiring or more obscure.

With the final note of the song, the deacon in his dark suit coat suggested that another song be sung and that the Preacher would probably then arrive. There were mingled "Yea-man"s from the benches and the Deacon, with no musical accompaniment, of course, as there was no instrument in the church, say the first line of a lively tune. The audience caught it on the second line, and moved into it with vim, keeping time with their feet on the floor so rhythmically that I found myself tapping away with my toe, although I had never heard the hymn before. In the midst of it, one of the boys leaned over to me and announced that the sound of the car outside indicated that the preacher had arrived, as in truth he had, for with the conclusion of the 7th or 8th verse of the song, the Preacher,--a little short dark man did appear, and without preliminary remarks began his sermon for the evening.

It was not time for the sermon, after the singing had concluded and one or two worshippers had changed seats from one aisle to the other, obviously to sit near friends, and one or two youths and sauntered out and four or five had ampled in. The Preacher began thus:

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Brethern and Sistern

I can't be saved without the spirit of Jesus, and I can't have the spirit of Jesus if I don't sing. Now I've been singing and I've got the spirit of Jesus. Now I've gwine to be saved" "He's gwine to be saved" came back three or four scattered voices from the audience, and a sprinkle of "Amen's."

The Preacher continued:

I was a walkin' down the street in old Ca-purnum, and there I saw a man who was blind. He couldn't see. And as I was a-walking there by the blind man, I looks up and there I saw a man".

By this time, I though I noted an asthmatic gasp to his voice, which became theatrical in the next line,

"And there I saw a man, I tells you, and who was that man I seen. Why brethern and sistern, that man I done see was"--an interlude of extending gasps,--"Jesus!"

"He saw Jesus" surged up from the audience, followed quickly by a variety of "Jesuses", spouting from various places in the crowd, some almost devout and some almost sacreligious.

"Jesus, - Jesus" "He sure saw Jesus".

And what did that man what couldn't see do then?,"---and so for and so on for the next hour, with the asthmatic gasps becoming more frequent and striking, and the scattered interjections from the crowd more frequent and assured.

I am not certain if it was an emphasis that made it so, or if it was merely the sound of the word and its obvious infrequency in the darkie's vocabulary, but there was one word to which they all responded with greater vehemence than all the rest. It was the word: "Manifest". I believe the Preacher said that some act or other was "Manifest". It struck the imagination of the congregation and almost as one they echoed "manifest", and several benches rolled it over and over again even after the preacher had moved on to his next sentence.

The sermon itself was rather simple, without much stress on the logic side and with much mis-quoting from the Bible to round out a point the speaker was trying to make



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With the conclusion of the sermon, the audience, lead by the preacher moved spiritedly into a hymn of exhortation. Pat's head, which had been gently nodding during the latter part of the preaching, suddenly straightened up. As it is the custom for the signing to continue for another hour, and as the clock was already on the way to eleven, I concluded it might be well for us to start our long trek down the road toward Melrose.

And so as the song reached avibrant crescendo, Pat, Joe and all the rest of us on our bench stealthily wirthdrew.

Outside on the steps in the dark we nearly catapulted over a collection of youths and maidens. Someone in the dark arose and confusedly ventured "Good evening, Mr. Francois". By his voice I could tell it was Emmett, Clyde or Davis, as one prefers to call Clemence's son-in-law. I offered him a cigartee, and he in turn lighted mine for me. The damsels bling on the steps straightened up a little in the flare of the match, and in order that they might resume whatever we had interr upted, I hastily say goodnight and continued with the boys. Surrounding the church we still more milling figures in the dark,--the number had obviously grown during the time we had been inside. There was now sound of voices in this silent host, save for an occasional good evening. Reaching the lane leading to the main road, Pat turned on his flash light so that we might avoid the mud-puddles. More figures sitting beside the turn rows revealed themselves in the subdued light.

"You got a long ways to walk" came a voice from the turnrow. I recognized it as that of Mitchell, the expert axeman of Melrose, whose tall, lithe body reclined with grace ~~am~~ along the little embankment on the other side of the ditch. We exchanged a few words regarding the prettiness of the night and passed on. Later, in remarking upon my surprise in seeing Mitchell in the vicinity of the church, and further from home than I, Frank giggled and said "I knowed he'd be there, cause I saen a lean, tall gal headed up the road toward church early in the evenin's, and I knowed sure 'nuf that Mitchell would be a-ramb in' along in that road 'fore long"

Mitchel, with a young wife at home with their four sickly children. Mitchell, too, would find the road home a devious one, after the singing service was finished and the tall, lankie maiden had quited the House of God.

And so we trudged down the river road toward home, breathing in the soft velvety atmosphere and s eculating much about the glrious constellations thatglowed like liquid gobules across the vast expanse of the heavens.

Joe said good night as he turned off toward his cabin, and Pat and I said goodnight as we reached the big house. At home, I flipped on the raio, just long enough to hear an announcer say "Twenty-six years ago today the first World War started". It was enough to set me think of the different world into which we had

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August 1st, - Thursday. page 6

into which we had swept, and yet how much the same it was basically even though the political and economic patterns had altered momentarily. And as I lay me down for sleep, I thought much about that seething mass of humanity, both inside and outside St. Mathew's Church, where the signing must still be going on within and the milling about still going on without.

As I slipped off in to oblivion, I remember turning over in my mind what Archibald Rutledge had said about the darkies and how they differed from the white: "The white man has to make money first and then can begin thinking about having fun, while the 'egro begins by having fun and if he makes any money along the way that in secondary and by the way."

Some of those darkies this moment at St. Mathew's wouldn't be home before two or three o'clock in the morning. By sun up or shortly thereafter they would be splitting wood or working in the fields, laughing withal, and as experts in the art of slow motion would contrive to conserve strength and cultivate relaxation even as they toiled while under the direct eye of the white man's supervision. They would loll about the store gallery or at home dur ng the noon hour, and so return to an afternoon of conservative effort. Eventually the sun would sink in the West and uninitiated white folks would see the poor darkies trudging homeward and feel sorry for their unhappy lot,--which, at best, it is. But the darkies wouldn't be in such a fram of mind, for sunset would terminate the "must" part of the darkie's day, and with twilight would come an urge for him to take up the real life which had been waiting for him since before dawn this morning.

It was Marcel Froust, in speaking of his associates who were white, who said: "At best, in trying to contemplate people, we at best can view them only as through a telescope."

So true it is, that it is almost a platitude to record it.

And yet I won er why people so seldm realize that in attempting t understand the darkie, the subject is, through racial and inherent differences, a million times more remote from popular comprehension.



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August 2nd, - Friday, 1940.

It was cloudy ~~when~~ when Frank arrived at five o'clock, but before he had poured my coffee it was raining mightily.

I "lay-long" and bathed leisurely, hoping that the rain would cease before I left Lyle's house for mine, but at 6:30 it was still pouring, which called for dry clothes when I reached home for breakfast.

I got out a flock of letters before nine, and by a quarter past it had ceased raining, and Aunt Cammie came over to run through the mail with me before starting dictation.

There was a splendid letter from Robina, saying that her apartment had been rented and that she was accordingly free for a twelfth month to take to the big road when and if. Naturally I automatically thought of the traces.

She also quoted from a letter from New York which seemed exceptionally fine and especially confusing, since it mentioned circumstances regarding travel in Texas which ran completely counter to a letter I received from Texas on the same subject. Aunt Cammie, being without information, was in a quandary to determine what move should be made, but felt something should be done. Together we concocted a telegram and got it on the wires. It is curious how little either of us know what to expect if anything as a result of it, and it is surprising how this circumstance coincides with another of a year ago which came to exactly nothing.

We worked until 11:30, when Aunt Cammie reclined on a sofa with a view of resting for half an hour before dinner. But dinner came and went and she didn't appear for the festivities which were less than dull without her gracing the board.

After inner we worked until almost four, when she decided to lie down again, and I thought of walking over to see Zeline. I got as far as Kane River bridge, by dint of much jumping of puddles, but discovered by the time I had reached the saloon that I would never be able to complete my trek up the heavily rutted and muddy road, and I accordingly chatted with Terrance whom I found on the saloon gallery, and so returned to Melrose to write and to bath before supper.

There were four of us for supper, or possibly five, although Aunt Cammie did not join us, being intent on her flowers in the front garden, and withal rather too tired to navigate a vast sea of silence which might develop at the board. When we were done, J. A. joined her in the garden for horticultural discussions, while Pat fed the dachshunds and I fortified Grandpa and little Grandpa.

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August 2nd, - page 2.

As I was returning to the big house, I found Edward and one of his friends awaiting me there. I had wanted Edward to see the stained glass in my house, and seemed impressed by it. He said he had come to ask if I had a copy of Lyle's Children of Strangers which he should like to buy for himself if we didn't chance to have a copy. I told him I thought something could be done about it, and I would let him know later.

From 7 until 8, we all read in Aunt Cammie's room,--Pat with one of his Tarzan books, and Aunt Cammie and me concentrating on Slavery in Mississippi.

It was hot and muggy outside when we said good night, and I took some ice home with me for a couple of cool drinks before going to bed. It was pleasant to sit in front of the openings on the white garden, sipping the cool beverage, and drinking in the startling effects of intense heat lightening which from moment to moment flooded the white garden like a glorified explosion of flash light blubs, and thus repeated for over an hour with interchanges of instantaneous black outs.

Grandpa looked at the screen door with determination,--doubtlessly seeking a dry berth in face of the lightening which suggested the approach of a wild night. But the night moved on, and save for the drone of vast insect choruses, there was none, and eventually even the lightening faded out, and sleep blacked out the opaque night.



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August 3rd, 1940 - Saturday.

I had hoped to walk this morning, but Frank advised against it, fearing that I would encounter soggy roads, thanks to the recent rains. He suggested Monday instead. I acquiesced.

After breakfast, I worked on mail until 9:30, when Aunt Cammie came to work on the Diary with me, but as coffee came before we had started, and as Payne came before we were finished with the mid-morning brew, I gave up the idea of working at that moment, leaving Aunt Cammie to talk with her son, while I visited the store for the in-coming mail.

Afterward I went to my house and pounded out some things until after 11 o'clock, when Pat came to tell me his Grandmother was all set for labor at Lyle's house.

I accordingly joined her there, and we both felt a renewed vigor on the strength of what Payne had had to say, and we accordingly got through with a goodly stack of work when the dinner bell had rung at 12.

After dinner we labored again, and stopped only at quarter of four, when Aunt Cammie went over to the big house, and I retired to mine.

I undressed, seated myself in front of an electric fan and listened to the radio for half an hour, after which I bathed and shaved leisurely, and so back to the radio to catch up on my foreign broadcasts which I had missed so consistently during the past week.

Supper at six, and afterward reading until eight o'clock. J. H. came in for a few moments, suffering from his fever which still fluctuates around 101 and 102, although he is up and doing both about Melrose and in town. He mentioned politics, and remarked in passing that as a price for having the Noe faction swing their votes to Jones in the last election as against the Long Machine, Jones had to promise to know half the patronage jobs in Louisiana, if successful, --and thus are politics played.

At eight we said goodnight, and with a slight stuffiness in my head, and feeling generally older than would appear normal, thanks to a touch of a cold, I fell into bed at ten minutes after eight, and so slept without awakening.

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August 4th, 1940.--- Sunday.

I was ready to arise when Frank arrived, and was well on the way towards a nice big bouquet of dahlias before breakfast.

After listening to the usual excellent musical program on early Sunday morning, I made a round of the lilies, and got a nice big armful of regals which do much toward turning any room into Araby.

Aunt Cammie came over to work with me at Lyle's until after 10, when she returned to the big house for a moment's day before the family blew in, while I continued on my typewriter.

Dinner was a bit more festive from the food view point, because it was sister's birthday, although socially things didn't seem to out-shine any of the other Sundays which are usually drab enough.

After dinner I worked on my machine until about three when at the coffee hour, Frank and Sue Whitehead, and two men from California, --one of them Frank's brother came.

After visiting with Aunt Cammie in the big house, they all came over to Lyle's house. I was particularly glad to talk with Frank Whitehead, as he is Secretary to Governor Jones, and somehow, like other people in such positions, somehow casts shadows in conversation of events before they happen in a political way.

Sister told Mr. Whitehead many things about how bad the Long regime had been. As Secretary to Sam Jones, I imagine Mr. Whitehead didn't find all of this information especially new. The baby, as usual without proper padding, sat in the middle of the floor, and as Mr. Whitehead was making a particular point to me on certain current political aspects, Sister suddenly screamed for her little colored boy Harry, playing in the far xx garden, to come and change the baby. Mr. Whitehead never did get around to complete the point he was making.

I talked for quite a while with Mrs. Whitehead, too, and found her grand. A little after five, they decided it was time to be starting back toward Baton Rouge, and saying goodbye, they passed in going out by the front gate, the Scarborough's from Natchitoches who were just arriving. They lingered until six, when supper came and went, as did Sister and her husband and offspring.

For myself, I had already left xx to bath and shave before joining Aunt Cammie in her room to read until eight and so goodnight.



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Monday, August 5th, 1940.

When I awoke at 4:30, I thought it must be raining, since the sky seemed overcast, and the breeze carried a sound of rain. A few moments later, however, I realized that the sky, in reality was perfectly clear, and that what I had mistaken for clouds was merely the dawn which breaks a little later these days which have left June 21st far behind. And the sound which I heard was not of rain but merely the wind passing through the giant banana trees which are taller and more luxuriant this year than ever, thanks to the endless rains and tropical heat.

It was five thirty when Frank arrived, and six thirty when I had bathed and breakfasted, and was in the big road.

Half way to Montrose, J. H. came along in a car with Celeste and a driver. They asked me to join them for a ride, which I did as far as town,--with J. H. calling on his physician to check on his curiously fluctuating temperature, and so on to Shreveport, while I began walking back the 20 miles toward home.

The cement pavement was hot under the full glare of the sun, but the humidity was kept down by the good breeze that blew steadily from the East. At Natchez, La., one of my old friends on Cane River came along, asking me to ride, which I did, having already covered 7 or 8 miles.

After crossing the Bermuda bridge on La Cote & Joyeuse, I ~~walked~~ rode for a ways down the gravel road that parallels the river, and then saying goodbye, struck out along for Melrose. I hadn't gone far, however, before a car with two mulatto youths drove out from one of the houses bordering the River, and ~~xx~~ waited for me to come along side. They ~~xx~~ invited me to ride back to Melrose, which I did,--not knowing either of them although they both knew me.

Leaving them at the store, I saw the clerk who told me to youths from New Orleans had just called for me and departed,--a certain Mr. Clovet, I believe, and a Mr. Plunkett. I can't imagine who these people may be or how they knew me. They left me a note but it was so curiously written in French that no one could decipher it.

Aunt Cammie and I worked on the Diary from 10 until 12, and after dinner ran through the mail which for some reason had not been brought in before. It was very thin and almost puzzling for the absence of news from quarters which we felt assured must have written if our telegrams had in reality gone through on Friday.

We worked together again during the afternoon until after four when Aunt Cammie undertook a siesta before supper, while I shaved and bathed. An old friend came in to see me as I was completing this regular afternoon ritual, and we fell to talking about his family, and through his conversation I felt I glimpsed a

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a kind of cross-section into the problems and customs of all mulatto families.

He told me that how as a boy he had saved his money, giving it to his mama every Saturday night, so that when he was ready to marry, he could go buy himself a new suit and his ~~wife~~ his bride a new dress, and even buy plenty of whiskey for the celebration without having to "axe" anybody for anything. The early years of their marriage had been happy and three children were born to them, each 2 years apart. But one day the domestic horizon was suddenly beclouded when his brother told him that their first cousin, Pierre Nirom, was spending a great deal of his time with his cousin's wife while the husband was not at home.

A ruse was cooked up whether by the husband would have to go to town for a day or two, and by circling back on his house after leaving, he found that the surreptitious love affair was going full blast before he had been gone less than an hour. Instead of walking in the back door of the ~~xx~~ cabin on them, he went to the front door and banged, he ring them both fall out of bed, and the man bolt out into the night from the back door which had been open all the time.

He told the wife she would have to go to, and she did for 11 months, but came back late one night ~~xxxx~~ after husband had gone to bed, pleaded for him to take her back, and ended up by taking off her clothes and getting into bed, too.

The ~~xx~~ former years of married bliss ~~xx~~ mved along smoothly in duplication of those that had gone before, until one day, the husband returned home unexpectedly after being soaked by high water, and found his wife sitting by the fireplace, with a nigger,--mulattoes love to refer to colored people as niggers,--cleaning the wife's finger nails.

The colored man left abruptly, and the husband told his wife that he ought to kill her, but he didn't have any gun. She pleaded with him, and although he wore her out for a while, he let her go, and from that day until now,--some five or six years, the ex-wife has been living with the expert male matriarchist, who, strangely enough, seems to get along in a friendly enough manner with his wife's former husband. Now, of course, the children have grown up and for the most part they seem to be exactly like their friends and contemporary mulatto young people,--honest, good looking and withal rather high strung and untutored so far as usually accepted grooves of procedure tend to follow.

But our conversation was cut short by the supper bell, and afterward Aunt Cammie and I read plantation history until eight, when we said goodnight.



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Tuesday, August 6th, 1940.

Another beautiful day with a continued breeze to cut the effects of the sunshine and humidity.

Back from Shreveport, J. H. isn't feeling so well, and still runs a fever, although the consensus of the medical minds in Shreveport, assured him that he needs no medicine and that he is coming along alright. It certainly sounds as though Mary Baker Eddy is making in-roads on the American Medical profession.

But in view of the fact that J. H. isn't feeling well, Celeste and Aunt Cammie are both worried, and all thought of going to see poor old Madame Aubert-Roque went by the board, although it was high time she received some of the over-due supplies which Aunt Cammie always keeps her stocked with.

I accordingly undertook delivery of this package on foot, although Aunt Cammie thought it might be wiser to send it by some other means, since the morning was warm and the distance along the river road is somewhat extended, although I believe it is not more than two or three miles.

Before I got started, however, I ripped off a little mail, and brought some other little items up to date, so that it was approaching nine before I got under way.

The sun was hot and the package wasn't too light, so that well before I reached my destination, I was turning over in my mind if I should take a dip in Cane River with my clothes on or just let my clammy wet shirt continue to flap in the breeze like an old spray soaked sail flopping lazily on a New England fishing smack.

At Madame Aubert's, I found her standing by the fireplace,-- a sight which pleased me much, as I feared that after her fall she might be done in bed. She told me about her several "miseres", and how her son, Denis, had come along just after she had fallen down, and said he couldn't help her, as he had to go somewhere, and that since that time,--even as ever before, he hadn't so much as made a cup of coffee for her, although her neighbors and more remote kin folk had come by to look after every day, although, Denis, living in the same house, had done nothing for her.

She explained her fall in detail, and pointed out that sometimes she is rather unsteady on her feet, and as though to prove this, she began staggering gently, grasping unexpectedly and my arm for support, and almost up-setting my own sense of balance. Quite an old actress, Madame Aubert.

On the way home, I dropped in at the saloon to quench my parched throat, for many cars had passed me on the road, and thanks to the dust, plus a slight cold I have had since Saturday, I felt groggy enough.

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Tuesday, August 6th, 1940.-- page 2.

I found the saloon gay, withal, with a number of handsome mulatto youths, who spoke to me by name but whom I had never seen before. Joe Chevalier was there, too, and asked me to have a beer. Bill and Marvin seemed to be in fine form and so was Terrance Madelin until, sitting in a semi-reclining position on a bench, someone put a piece of ice down the back of his shirt, to the roar of guffaws from the idle hangers on when Terrance suddenly awoke and registered a puzzled expression as to what could have occurred.

Terrance and some other youth found it too hot for me to walk home from the saloon, and accordingly drove me back, which I appreciated, although I must say the half mile didn't seem an excessive distance for me to walk.

Aunt Cammie and I worked on the Diary until noon, and after dinner we continued with the good work.

A little before three, however, we laid aside our work or the day, and I took off my long beard, before having a lemonade. Joe came by to show me his new bicycle, and several of his little friends were prowling around the gardens, air-gun in hand, to slaughter the blue-jays of which we still have adequate numbers in spite of this heavy barrage laid down by the little colored boys.

And so, a little after three, I started for Zelina's, whom I had dropped by to see for a moment in the morning when I learned that she would be quilting this afternoon.

I found her with Madame Madelin and another woman I didn't know, quilting with deft fingers on a quilt that had been stretched on frames that were suspended from the ceiling by wires at each corner of the frame. The quilt itself was made of pieces from old flower sacks, and some of these very very pretty,--some having flowers, perhaps 4 or 5 inches in each square, while other pieces were small arabesque designs, etc., all pieced together, I gathered, at random. I hadn't known before that flour came in cloth sacks and that the designs were so pretty. I suppose something of charm and beauty could be made from these if the right were given to the choice of designs and placing of them in some kind of harmony.

Joe was in a near by field, and one of the little boys was sent to fetch him in, and together we sat on the front gallery talking for the most part about the Prudhommes of La Cote Joyeuse, and of Jean Baptiste Prudhomme, father of Jean Prudhomme, and of a colored family also, one member of which was the mulatto, Aspasie Prudhomme who later married Florival Metoyer, son of old Jean Baptiste Metoyer.

Back home before five o'clock, and after dinner a tour of the gardens with Aunt Cammie and then to reading. We interrupted this however, to close some of the houses, and dormers in the big house, as the wind was rising, and the radio had spoken of tornadoes south of here. And so at eight we said goodnight, and by 8:50, I was in bed asleep.



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Wednesday, August 7th, 1940.

It was 4:30 when I awoke, and in spite of the blanket over me I was chilly. I have no idea of the temperature, but I figured it must be below 70 degrees which is probably odd for Louisiana in August.

Dawn broke slowly and with hesitation, as layers of clouds seemed to increase the gloom as the morning advanced.

The wind blew strongly from the East, as though rushing to meet the storm center which the radio announces as moving along the Louisiana coast toward Texas.

It was nearly six when Frank arrived, and it was almost seven before I left Lyle's house for my own for breakfast. The breeze was laden with water particles, although I could determine if it was misting or if the whole atmosphere was merely reaching the saturation point without any water descending at all.

Aunt Cammie and I worked all morning, save for the few minutes at coffee time when we ran through the mail which included a letter from a friend in New York reporting the receipt of a letter from a boy friend in the German Army who wrote with assurance that the War in Europe would be over shortly. Being so close to the seat of evil, he may have precious inside knowledge for such a conclusion, but I can merely wonder.

About 2 o'clock Aunt Cammie returned to work on the Diary again with me. She said Sister had run in a short time after dinner and reported a most extraordinary circumstance that took place in Cloutierville this morning at a funeral.

Some kin of the Melrose overseer lives in Cloutierville, and this family had a son, some 8 years old who had been crippled all his life. He died a couple of days ago, ~~xxx~~ after an existence which had been trying both for the poor boy, his parents, and I suppose for the colored boy of some 14 or 15 years who had been his constant attendant for several years.

At the funeral, the pall bearers were several white boys of the town, plus one colored boy,--the one who had always been the little boy's attendant. Sister said that the colored boy was the chief pall bearer,--although I had never heard of gradations in the field of pall bearers before.

It seems that the town of Cloutierville was in a dither of excitement because of this extraordinary doings,--all white pall bearers except one who was colored. The circumstance, Aunt Cammie says, is so unusual that it would be well to record it in my Journal.

Of course I had often heard of planters borne to their last resting place by faithful slaves, but in this year of Grace, 1940, for a faithful colored boy to be included with white pall bearers at a funeral is something else again, according to local custom.

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August 7th, 1940,-- Wednesday. page 2.

To keep the record straight, I must further report, that so far as I could learn, no one resented the presence of the colored boy, per se, and yet the inclusion of color in the ceremonies was so unique that everyone seemed at least non-plussed, if not slightly flabbergasted.

If these lines should ever be read by persons in various sections of the country, the individual reader, wherever he may find himself, may care to pause for a moment and try to picture to himself just how different the reaction may be to other readers in other sections of the country who may be contemplating this scene at the same time.

The extremely complicated pattern of economic and social life in any given locality is bound to be rather complicated and intricate for comprehension by people living outside. I was never more conscious of this fact that when I heard of the funeral at Cloutierville.

That old rascal, Father Becker, they say, preached the service in the church, and a very good one he preached, too, they say. Some days back, however, when the matter of administering extreme unction came up, it seems there was a problem, the nature of which I do not understand at this writing, but it had something to do about the impossibility of administering it in the house where the boy lived, and the child was accordingly carried out in the yard where unction was given under a big tree. "All This And Heave, Too".

And as has happened on other occasions, I suddenly found myself mis-quoting the Bible to myself: "Suffer the little white children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for such is the Kingdom of Heaven".

Day ebbed as it had come, with lowering clouds, increased squalls of wind and fine rain, and withal chilly and damp inside. To avoid being blown out of bed when I retired at 8 o'clock, I closed all the doors and windows on the north side of the house and all those on the south side, save two doors which was sufficiently ample to make the place a veritable cave of the winds,--and so to sleep.



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August 8th, 1940. Thursday.

The day is like November,--gray, windy and rain.

Frank didn't appear until a quarter of six, and the lateness of the hour added to the sensation of winter which the falling thermometer had made sufficiently manifest.

All day the wind blew, never dying down, but always sweeping on high like waves breaking on the shore with every 7th or 11th seemingly twice as mighty as the several that preceded it.

The radio sketched the path of a hurricane which is sweeping westward along the Louisiana coast and headed toward Texas. I suppose these vast waves of rain and storm in this locality are being drawn westward, too, toward the center of the low which probably will dissipate itself in the Panhandle country.

Aunt Camie and I worked until after 11 o'clock, when I betan working by myself on my typewriter, but not for long, what with the arrival of Sam Brown to fix up the house, as an aid to Rita who remains in the big house today because of the torrents that cascade along the air ways outside.

Sam likes to talk, and I must say I like to hear him,--not especially for the gossip he hands out but rather for the individualistic manner in which he dishes it out.

Yesterday, as was natural, we went over the weather pretty thoroughly. This lead us around to the devastation the storm was piling up in the form of mangled pecan trees and scattered fruit from the trees, not to mention the destruction of the blossoms and the formed square of the bolls which are strewn all over the fields. Sam opined that with all the hands already in debt, because of the lacking of work in July, thanks to the excessive rains, it now seemed likely that this storm would reduce the amount of earnings which might have been expected from a good pecan or cotton crop, for in the picking of cotton and the gathering of pecaness, the darkies usually hope to catch up in their indebtedness at the store and possibly make enough to buy them some clothes for the coming year.

This brought us around to those people who have plenty of children, too young to work, but old enough to want food,--Mrs. Elam Brown, for example, who is no cotton picker, and yet already with five children on her hands and another one on the way, through the good offices of Mat Burden. There's Elmer, too, with her three children and another one on the way, thanks to Mat Burden, too, but Elmer is more lucky than La Brown, since Mat at the moment is living with Elmer, although that may be no longer lived that his stay with Ellen, the laundress, with whom he stayed long enough to beget their little girl who is now about 6.

May said that Mrs. Elam Brown tried to get on the relief

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relief rolls, but no one on the place would second her attempt, since everyone knew that neither she nor the children would get any good from such a stipend, since the first thing Adam Brown would do on receipt of the monthly payment would be to get in the big road and head for the saloon.

Sam also spoke of another "lady", living on the back section of Melrose toward Little River. She had five children, and found it difficult to support them after her husband,--if any--passed on. She applied for relief, and was lucky enough to get fifteen dollars a month. While not excessive in any region, \$15.00 a month for a woman with five children seems to be considered extremely favorable.

But even as in the beginning, when Adam and Eve became confused as to what ~~shxxx~~ use might be made of their ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ amplitude of their apple crop, so the head of this little brood had to wrestle with the question of disbursing the monthly stipend wisely. A tall dark man appeared on the scene, and frequently made nightly visits to the woman's cabin to comfort her in her loneliness. She recompensed him from the \$15.00 monthly allowance. Just how much reward he received for his services, no one was certain, but unquestionably the relief ~~money~~ money was used less for the welfare of the children than for the their month's lusty companion in arms.

Eventually the relief administration took a hand in the matter, admonishing the mother and cutting the relief check from \$15.00 to \$10.00 month, with the hint that the whole relief allowance would be wiped out if any more monies were diverted to her nocturnal visits and thus Sam concluded his story: "That rain outside sure am a-rainin', and sure 'nuf them cotton blooms is a-layin' in the mud and the pecaness am a-droppin' so it sure looks like a plumb short crop this season. And them folks is jus' a-rambling and a-ramblin', and it don't looks like you kin help 'em now how."

The political economist ventures the prediction that the underprivileged are on the verge of some sort of financial emancipation, and yet, after 75 years of personal "freedom", it appears that the colored people are still a long way from that Utopia which the Abolitionists used to picture as they turned their backs on the industrial slavery of the New England mill-towns and cried crocodile tears over the condition of the slavery existing below the Mason-Dixon Line.

And so the day ran through, with the wind howling and branches crashing and vainly trying to out-racket the storm on my typewriter.

After supper we read from Sydnor's Slavery in Mississippi, and at eight we said good night. Water an inch or two deep flooded the gardens, and with wet feet, I reached Ayle's house, slipped out of my clothes, and fell into bed, twice as cosy for the heavy blanket over me as a kind of bulwark against the wind and rain that rages without.



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August 9th, 1940 - Friday.

I awoke at 2 o'clock, and for a moment struggled in perplexity over the profound quiet that unexpectedly engulfed the night.

After a two day's blow, the wind had died, and no sound of rain prevailed against the silence. I guess the insects far and wide must have been drowned out, too, for not a cricket sawed on his violin nor even a mosquito buzzed threateningly about my pillow. Half asleep, I pondered upon the possibility that I had ever heard the quiet of the night so distinctly, and in so pondering feel back to sleep.

It was a quarter of six when Frank arrived and I awoke to contemplate with him the great banana stalks that were fattened along the lawn of the white garden and the great branches from the pecanec back beyond the bambo hedge which had been half lopped off ~~the~~ from the trees.

The day was gray with a hint of mist, but the storm was finished and on the morrow the gardens would seem as new again.

Aunt Cammie and I worked on the Diary. With yesterday's storm still fresh in our minds, and radio accounts of the hurricane sweeping along the Louisiana coast, we were doubly struck by an August 11th,--as I recall,--entry by Mr. Wailes, for the year 1856. He remarked that from the appearance of the weather and from reports, a heavy storm must be raging along the Gulf, and then a few days later, he reported the news dispatches which told of the destruction of Last Isle,--a storm in which scores of Louisian's gentry lost their lives at that fashionable resort when everything,--save one cow on the island, was swept into the sea. Sometime I must read Lafcadio Hearne's excellent description of this extraordinary disaster.

We worked until after eleven, and then ran through the mail which although small, was interesting, and just a little curious in the conclusions ~~were~~ were forced to draw that our efforts at conveying messages in certain directions had been futile.

Another curious twist to the mail was the receipt of a package containing a garment that became my frame to a T, and yet it was from a source quite unexpected, and was in no wise related to a similar garment of which I had had correspondence from the same city, although the individuals were totally unknown to each other.

After dinner we worked until coffee time, after which Aunt Cammie re-organized her gardeners working on the point of the embankment that juts out into Cane River opposite the front gate, and afterward we had coffee together, while we went on different errands, mine primarily concerned with trying on my new finery. Henry knocked, while I was thus engaged, announcing a telegram for me. I was enchanted and at the same time relieved of the puzzling speculations as to what had happened to our previous correspondence.

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messenger seemed to unravel the whole business.

Supper was good with a reduced assemblage to make the pleasures of conversation balance nicely with the excellence of the food, and particularly the newly baked ham which made excellent sandwiches for me, what with nice light biscuits and an ocean of fresh butter and a liberal spreading of sophisticated mustard.

We roamed the gardens after supper, Aunt Cammie making vast inroads on the giant cannas which must be thinned out to ~~the~~ save themselves from stifling each other. At seven, there was conversation with Robina in Shreveport, who promises to come down on Sunday, bringing a visitor from afar with her which will mean much.

Until eight we read from the Journal of Southern History, remarking particularly upon the McCullah (?) Diary, and of recent L. S. U. acquisitions, including certain papers of Mrs. Jane Ferguson of Church Hill and the Buckners of Natchez, as well as thousands of items from the economic field of famous Uncle Sam Plantation, covering its operations over an extended ante-bellum and post bellum period. There was another item which intrigued us much, too,--a certain Barrow Diary beginning in 1833. I am under the impression it might contain something in the 1835 entry which would be of especial interest to us, for Miss Louise has taken us through this old strong hold of the Barrow's and some of the relics of their opulent civilization impressed us enormously.

We said goodnight a little after eight, and fortified by a bowl of ice and Grandpa, I came home for Coco-Cola which I enjoyed as never before, as I contemplated Macy.



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Saturday, August 10th, 1940.

Six o'clock, and an unfinished dawn when Frank arrived, a little later than usual by the clock but on the second so far as the breaking of day is measured.

The sky, for a change, was all blue and gold, in contrast to the endless livid gray cloud banks that have hung like a pall over the heavens for the past too many days.

I ripped out a flock of letters before 8:30 when Aunt Cammie came to dictate for a while and to cogitate with me on the excellence of ante-bellum pictures as revealed and made vibrant by the Diaries of those days, and so on to coffee time when Celeste came in to chat for half an hour, after which we ran through the mail which was modest but good, and withal, some of it contradictory as contrasted with telegrams which had arrived after these pieces of mail had been posted at ~~the~~ at their source of origin.

Dinner, and much hilarity about the board, discussing the latestest pranks of the darkies, including the unexpected action of a black boy who be-sought employment from Aunt Cammie yesterday, after the overseer and J. H. had found him of little consequence in the field. I suppose he was a boy of some 18 or 20 years, and seemingly strong but docile. Aunt Cammie, feeling sorry for him, and put in in toe of Bud, to cut weeds at the far end of the kitchen gardens. The report came back that his efforts didn't count for much.

Next day he came back for additional work, but while awaiting a word from Aunt Cammie, he watched Fat and his little colored associates taking ~~at~~ pot-shots at the blue-jays with an air-gun. The shot wasn't strong enough to put the birds out of commission, but it usually did knock them silly for a few moments when they were usually finished off.

Poor old Virgil at this time was totting wood from the kindling pile in the wood lot to the house. The youth, not to be idle while awaiting Aunt Cammie's appearance, borrowed the air gun from the boys, and as Virgil leaned over, ~~x~~ fired at him point blank, the shot striking Virgil in the seat of the pants. The victim jumped clean over the wood pile, startled out of his wits, but obviously not hurt, as the shot would not be strong enough to penetrate his overalls. But he was justifiably mad, and grabbing the nearest stick, he chased the offending youth, who dropped his weapon, and flew from the yard, never to return.

There was talk of getting enlistment papers and bringing them down from town, of persuading the youth to sign his name to them, and so engineering him off into the army or navy for a season, but I don't know if this rather questionable procedure will be effected.

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After dinner, Aunt Cammie and I continued our good endeavors as in the morning, stopping only when ice cream arrived around three and we were persuaded that it was time to knock off for the afternoon.

I finished up a flock of little odds and ends, tried to rest for a few minutes, was disturbed twice by visitors, and finally relinquished the idea and after bathing and shaving, joined

Aunt Cammie who by that time was making mighty in-roads on over-weening plants in the west garden.

Supper and after ards a little round of the kitchen gardens to gather some luscious looking egg-plants and some flowers for Mary, the cook, who will come tomorrow morning to get them in order to decorate her daughter's grave for Home Coming Day which her church is celebrating on the morrow.

Before joining Aunt Cammie in her room, I went to feed Grandpa and Little Grandpa, but found them in a dither because that disagreeable Persian tom cat of Celeste's was be-deviling their eating place and taking passes at them.

I succeeded in catching this maurauder and took him in my house for safe keeping, but he must have sensed that I had evil designs, for he tore away from me and threw himself at the windows, trying to smash them and so effect an escape.

I concluded that it would go much easier, this capture, if Frank could bring his experience to bear on the matter, and so I called him from the store where he was purchasing his weekly supplies. Together, we searched for the animal which by now was vicious. Frank lassoed him, but found with a rope securely fastened in a noose about his neck, he fought like a tiger, and it was only by keeping the rope taut that we could keep him from making mince meat out of us.

This business went on for half an hour, after which peace had returned to Melrose, and Aunt Cammie and I read at random for the Journal of Southern History, including interesting references to Dr. Mercer who once had so successfully operated Laurel Hill Plantation near Natchez where Pierce Butler now lives. There was also a hilarious review of that volume: They Found It In Natchez, with much speculation as to what it was "they" found.

Nine o'clock, and we said good night, and to Lyle's I strolled reluctant to forego the beauty of the first perfect moonlight night I have felt in many weeks.

I sat for a while, with a glass of ice and a bottle of coca-cola, and as the clock struck ten, folded up my beard.



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Sunday, Augst 11th, 1940.

Beautiful day, with surpassing intensity of the brilliancy of the sunshine and the deepness of the steel-blue of the sky.

Frank arrived at twenty minutes of six. His hand shook noticeably as he poured my coffee. I closed my eyes as he lighted my cigarette to obviate his embarrassment. He is eating too little of late and drinking in small quantities too steadily. I'm afraid a storm of varying & unhappiness is likely to develop in some unexpected direction if this situation continues. Frank will probably get the worst of it, but unquestionably, if it does break, we shall all suffer in one way or another from its explosion. Later in the day I shall drop a gratuitous word of atmospheric prediction, but that will probably in no way alter the course of the on-rushing storm.

Before 8 o'clock the fireplaces were banked with great masses of Milk and Wine lilies, freighting the air with a perfume almost too heavy to bear, while bouquets of delicious pastel dahlias struck a color note to intensify the whiteness of the walls and draperies.

Before nine, Aunt Cammie came over to dictate from the Wailes manuscript, remaining until after coffee, when the arrival of the family took her back to the big house, and so leaving me to pick up my correspondence.

Robina had written that Zola was arriving this morning in Shreveport at 7:20, and that she would bring Zola down sometime during the day, although, because of the uncertainties of train schedules, etc., we shouldn't await dinner for them

if they should be late

A clever girl, Robina. Knowing full well that the Henry clan would assemble, as always, for Sunday dinner, she would see to it, I felt assured, that no intrusion on the scarcity of the Sunday mid-day meal. "As thought the Devil, saying Mass, the sacred wafer ate".

And so the morning passed, and the dinner bell rang, and the board was cleared before one. Half an hour later, Robina and Zola arrived, after having had a busy morning in Shreveport, breakfasting at Robina's, riding about the town a bit, and calling on Nell Fish for a late breakfast.

We had much to say together,--it had been so long since anything but the mails had been a mode of contact, and after coffee and ice cream behind the African House, we three rode down as far as Magnolia plantation and back, after which we found Aunt Cammie was alone, her Sunday dinner guests having flown, so that we might have a leisurely supper and chat for a little while in Aunt Cammie's room.

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Sunday, August 11th, 1940 - page 2.

By eight o'clock, the little traveler from Manhattan was put to bed. Aunt Cammie was tired enough to decline a stroll in the open, too, and so Robina and I started out for a mile turn before saying Goodnight.

The moon was nearly full and the cool of evening still radiating a subdued heat of the day. It was pleasant along the Cane River bridge, and the cotton fields were peaceful under the stilly August moon. Away across the patch at the turn of the river, a light burned in Frank's cabin. It was good to drink in the quiet and delicious softness of the luscious quietness, broken only by the vast harmonies of a myriad insects and the far away echo of a darkie's voice, seemingly a synthetic substance of the yellow, velvety night.

Back home by nine, and so to bed.



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Monday, August 12th, 1940.

Up at five thirty, with Frank announcing that the Madam and Miss Robina were already awake, and that Miss Robina would be ready to start for Shreveport before seven.

I, too, would be ready, and was waiting on the back steps when she appeared, with Aunt Cammie, in her unfailing good humor to bid us good bye and to concil me against walking to far in the full heat of the day.

I rode as far as Grand Ecure with Robina, talking as always we talk when time seems limited and much has been left unsaid from the night before.

Walking back through Town, I stopped but once, and then resumed my exercise, toward h me. At the turn outside town, J. H. passed me going toward town. He called to me, saying that he would pick me up on his way back shortly. I accordingly continued my jaunt toward home, expecting him to overtake me soon. After about 7 miles on the pavement, however, I began to wonder if he might have forgotten me. The sun was hot, and my clothes stuck to clamily to me that I began to think a dip in Cane River would be the next item on the agenda for the day. At Natchez, Ga., a car stopped. It was ~~xxx~~ Edgar Rogier, who ~~xxx~~ was heading toward home on Cane River some mile or so from Melrose. I accordingly accepted his invitation to travel with him, and so was back home a little after 10.

Aunt Cammie and Zola had just ~~xxx~~ finished their ten o'clock coffee when I arrived, but my arrival had been noted by Frank,--whom I hadn't seen, and he accordingly appeared in Aunt Cammie's room with a tray, and a second round of Louisiana brew for those who had already partaken.

Zola left shortly to begin weaving with Henry, while Aunt Cammie and I withdrew to Lyle's house,--Summer Quarters, where we continued our work on the Wales manuscript until noon.

A little siesta after dinner, and then at three, Zola and I walked over to call on Zeline. We found h r and Joe and Edward at h me. We were enchanted to have her bring out her new quilt made of flour sacks, and others, too, which her mother had made half a century before. We also looked at some of the old buildings, made of century-old cypress logs, which clutter up the rear part of Zeline's little yard. Somehow we fell to talking about the China berry tree which grows beside the house. We spoke of its correct horticultural name,--Pride of India, and wondered what one called a China Berry tree in French. Zeline said it was called a "lilas", which seemed odd, indeed, since a lilac has nothing to do with a China berry tree, save for the color of its p blossoms. Eventually we came to the conclusion that since lilacs never did grow in this region, the earlier French settlers, recalling the beauty of the lilac tree at home, probably gave the China berry tree this name for lack of better.

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August 12th, Monday --page 2.

Around four o'clock, we all said "Au Revoir", and parted. On the way toward the bridge, we saw Frank on his horse. We spoke with him. I feel certain his hand will be shaking even more tomorrow morning, although the reason was scarcely apparant..

Back home by five, a quick shower, and a little visit from Aunt Cammie in my house to hear the news broadcasts before the supper bell.

Supper done, Grandpa and little Grandpa fed, and the two sausage dogs taken care of, we all sat in Aunt Cammie's room for an hour and a half, after which we said good night.

Last night's moon was as radiant again tonight. The African House seemed more etherial and unearthly than ever,--suspended, as it always seems, somewhere just above the foundations which the shadows from the vast projecting roof seems to cut from the ground.

We x walked to the Cane River bridge, and across it, and around by Felix's huse and on as far as the Church, its steeple seeming like a frosty finger of milk glass raised high above the Fragonard trees against the star studded sky.

It was a night of conversation when even the silence might have spoken, thanks to the glry of the moon, the peacefulness of the cotton fields, and the limpid surface of the mirror like river.

Unlike last night, there was no light in Frank's cabin. Then I remembered that after supper, while Aunt Cammie, Zola and I were taking a little turn in the side garden, Frank and Rita had left for home, and had been engaged in pleasant conversation for a few moments by Aunt Cammie. At the time Aunt Cammie, on learning that Frank was having Henry take him to town to have his radio fixed, suggested that it was such a pleasant night, Frank out to take his daughter May, along, and ask Rita to ride, too. Rita said she would certainly enjoy the ride, and Frank thought it would be nice for May and Rita to ride along. That's why there was no light in Frank's cabin tonight.

And yet, as we passed Rita's house, on our way back to Melrose, I thought I heard Rita's voice in the dark of her front gallery, talking with some of her brothers. Curious.

And so back h me to Summer Quarters for a round of Coca-Cola, much conversation, and so back to the big house to say goodnight, and to find some food for Grandpa who was dogging myfootsepts along the garden paths. Ten o'clock, and so goodnight.



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Tuesday, August 13th, 1940.

It was nearly six when Frank arrived this morning.

We chatted for a few moments as I drank my first cup of coffee, but nothing about the conversation was quite right. I tried not to notice a bruise or a cut over Frank's left eye. Rita, it seems, wasn't able to go last night. She discovered she had some sewing to do when she got home last evening,--some five minutes after she had expressed her enthusiasm to Aunt Cammie about making the trip. But May had gone along, and so had Frank's wife and his little boy. The radio had been fixed alright, and now played as good as ever.

And so Frank left to look after the morning's milk, and I skipped my second cup of coffee in favor of a bath. I listened to the news before breakfast arrived, and noticed that Mary the cook didn't pass from the side gate to the big house until after Frank had left the kitchen for my house bearing my breakfast to me. Surely many another servant would have let me wait until the cook arrived, but not Frank.

With the arrival of the breakfast, it was obvious that Frank had something weighing him down and that he wanted to talk about it. It was equally obvious, however, that he did not feel the time quite propitious, and he accordingly hurried along about his other duties. I let him go, feeling that before the end of the day he would avail himself of a more auspicious moment when his feelings had welled up a little further. Then we would talk.

I got out a flock of mail before nine o'clock, called on Aunt Cammie and Zola, and after Aunt Cammie had started Zola on another type of weaving, we took up our work on the Wailes manuscript once more.

At eleven we discontinued our labors, and I returned to my house--Winter Quarters, from Lyle's,--Summer Quarters.

I know not where Frank had been but he must have seen me enter my house alone, for he appeared shortly afterwards. I asked him to sit down. He seemed glad to accede.

Last night, he said, Rita had discovered that she couldn't go to town, and so his wife and daughter and little boy had gone with him and Henry. He and his wife, it seems had had a "fuss", and after they had returned home, and Henry had gone back to Montrose to take a man ~~xxxxx~~ home who had ridden down from town with them by the other road, Frank had gone to bed. While he slept, it seems, his wife had packed her things, including her diploma,--~~x~~ had taken the little boy with her and gone into the road, where, Henry, coming along, had thus found means to go to her Mama's and Papa's who lived some two or three miles up the Bermuda. Frank was distraught.

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Tuesday, August 13th, 1940, -- page 2.

Frank felt resentful at Henry for having taken his wife and child away, although he imputed nothing wrong in the matter, save that as a friend, Henry shouldn't have helped his wife slip away from him. As we spoke, Henry passed by my house from the bindery where he had been working towards the big house. He saw Frank and me talking. I gathered that neither he nor Frank were enchanted at the sight of each other.

Frank said he didn't know what to do. I recommended that he do precisely nothing, feeling as I did, that the whole business would unravel itself the more readily when everyone's nerves had quieted down a bit. Frank said he was afraid his wife would never come back to him, that he loved her, and he loved the little boy and that he didn't want to lose them. I pointed out that if his wife loved him, she would be sure to come back and that if she didn't love him, it would be better to know it now and re-build whatever foundations were needed for life on that basis,--but that I thought she would be back. I urged him to hold everything and wait.

The dinner bell sounded in the midst of our conversation, and we accordingly broke off for further discussions to be resumed at a later time.

After dinner, we all resumed our labors of the mornig, Aunt Cammie reading, Zola weaving, etc., until after lemonade when we all made a little tour of the garden before supper. Afterward Zola wrote some letters which Aunt Cammie and I finished off a little of the reading we had left at loose ends last Friday night.

Conversation was good at sun down, with much discussions as to personalities of mutual friends and the ever fascinating inter-play of brilliant lights and shadows of obscurity in motive which forever play across the tpestry of human life.

Eight o'clock, and another delicious moon. Good night to Aunt Cammie and another stroll down toward the Catholic Church on the other side of Cane River,--and so back to Winter Quarters for an hour of conversation before saying good night.



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Wednesday, August 14th, 1940.

Another perfect day, and another coffee hour at 5:30 which these days may tend toward more devotion to domestic problems than a discussion of the general state of the weather.

This morning I learned that Frank's daughter, May, is staying with Rita these nights, while one of Rita's brothers is sleeping at Frank's house. Frank says that this is because May would be alone at home between 4:30 A. M., when he leaves for Melrose and 6:00 Am. M. when May leaves for J. H. 's house where she is Celeste's maid. I said frankly that I couldn't understand why there was any especial reason why anyone should be afraid to stay an hour and a half at such a time of the day.

Frank said "ay felt happier this way. That may be so, but I have a feeling there must be some more primary reason."

No word has come through from Frank's wife as yet. I urged that he continue to sit tight.

Aunt Cammie and I worked until 10:30 when I left to see Felix Lorenz about taking Zola and me~~x~~ to Natchez tomorrow. I found that he wasn't at home, but was working at the Church a couple of hundred yards up the road. I accordingly headed in that direction, and found a goodly number of mulattoes about the place, with the two priest, shirtless, standing with arms a-kimbo in front of the place, looking woefully wise, and telling Joe Chevalier and other experienced painters how the job of painting the church should be done. I slackened my slow pace until they were done with their several recommendations, and the men had resumed their labors. Then I approached.

I greeted them with more respect than is there due, although I must admit I was rather casual about the whole business. I think their names are Monahan and Calahan, although I am not certain, for it has always sounded so much like a vaudeville team that I am always confusing it with half a dozen other combinations I have seen on the stage or heard on the radio. The older of the two men,--the ex-President of Duquesne University of Pittsburgh, eyed me rather coldly. "either he nor his younger associate recognized me, that was evident, for had he realized I hailed from Melrose, they probably would have unbent a little, since civility has been recognized by even this insitution, as not a bad policy when Melrose is concerned."

I thought of brushing aside their stupid coolness by making some dumb remark about mid-August seeming so early for Fall cleaning. The old man said it wasn't Fall cleaning they were doing. I countered by another dumb remark about it certainly being late for Spring cleaning. They didn't even bother to register or reply to this.

I accordingly passed by them and around to the side of the Church where half a dozen men were painting, starting to apply the

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Wednesday, August 14th, 1950.--page 2.

and to my surprise, I noticed that these men were beginning to apply the paint from the base of the Church, working upward toward the eaves. I must confess it was the first time I ever saw a large edifice painted in such a manner. I asked one of the men at work if it was customary in painting a building to begin at the bottom and work up. He grinned a little and said this was the way Father so and so said they ought to do it. I certainly hope these clerics know more about saying a Mass, but I reckon it doesn't much matter.

I finally found Felix, wielding a paint brush for all he was worth. I spoke with him about the business in hand, but in such a manner that the priest who can come along couldn't understand any thing I was talking about. It was rather amusing to see him suddenly get fascinated by the work an old fellow was painting along side Felix, and keeping his ear cocked so as to take in every word I might utter. I accordingly asked Felix if he was busy tomorrow, and if not that I might be able to do a little business with him. I also told him I would see him later in the day.

On leaving the Reverend Fathers glared at me as though I had been trespassing on their private property, and before I had turned into the big road, ~~zzzzzzzzzz~~ as I learned from Felix later, they had hot-footed it to him to ask him who I was and what I wanted. They certainly didn't know what I wanted, since Felix himself hadn't found out, but they did find out that I was a friend of their wealthiest parishoner, and they foolishly expressed their regret to Felix that they didn't know me, or otherwise, etc., etc.

Bake home for dinner, and after ards a little tour of the gardens with Aunt Gamie and Zola, and so over to Felix's house where I found him awaiting me on his front gallery. Pearl, his wife, was there, too, and we chatted a length, although both Pearl and I avoided any reference to Frank's wife having quit him, although, as Frank's sister, Pearl must have been dying to learn what I knew about it.

In regard to driving us to Natchez on the morrow, Felix said he would be d lighted, and that he would be ready at the side gate at Melrose tomorrow at 6 A. M.

On the way back home, I met Frank, and regretted that he was so obviously impatient for a solution of his problem. It would seem that he has been denying himself food since Monday, existing on other stimulants in small quantities to keep his nerves down. Obviously this is fast leading to nowhere, and something will break in one direction or another shortly. I hope that it is can be accomplished without too much ~~xx~~ wreckage strewn the highway of human endeavor.

Home for supper and afterwards good conversation before saying goodnight to Aunt Cammie and another walk beyond the bridge and back in another moonlit night as delicious as all have been since Sunday. Coca-Cola at Winter Quarters afterward, and so eventually goodnight.



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Thursday, August 15th, 1940.

Frank arrived this morning at a quarter of five. We talked until twenty minutes past, when he had to leave to awaken Zola.

A little before six, I had bathed and shaved, and bedecked myself in my new finery which had arrived from New York late last week. The new summer suit fitted perfectly.

I found Zola already, and Aunt Cammie, as always, looking as radiant and fresh as a daisy,--regardless of how little sleep she may have had during the night. She bade us farewell, said many kind things to Zola, with a assurance that she would hear from her as soon as she was back in New York, and admonished me that should I return tonight before 10 o'clock, she would be waiting to hear all about the day,--and if I should arrive later, she would be over to Winter Quarters early on the morrow.

Bud carried out the luggage to the car which was on schedule, while Frank met us on our way to the side gate. We were off before 6:10, and well on the Montrose lane before the sun was fairly above the eastern horizon.

We clipped along at a fairly good speed, passing through Natchitoches, Grand Ecure, Clarence, and thence on to Winfield where Felix had never been before. From this point on the country would be new to him. We stopped in Jean for a Coca-Cola, and were then on our way again, reaching Ferriday about 10, and the Mississippi levee opposite Natchez before 10:30. I was glad to sit for

15 or 20 minutes awaiting the ferry, for the sight of the bluffs of Natchez never fail to fill me with infinite satisfaction, although to the casual visitor I'm afraid they don't mean much. I can, as a matter of fact, think of but one or two people to whom this scene, as painted by Audubon, would register particularly.

In another month or so, the new bridge across the river will be completed and open for traffic, and then I suppose one will seldom experience the enforced contemplation of old Natchez while awaiting the vagaries of the Mississippi ferry.

Once across, we passed through wicked old Nunder-The-Hill, and so to the upper town, and along the bluffs to the railroad station where we learned that a train leaves for St. Louis at 6:40 P. M.

With the time limit thus established, we could lay out some plan for the hours ahead. First to the Zola Hotel, to telephone Mary Lambdin to leave a message that we would call this afternoon, and thence down Homochita Street, passed Dunelith, and around to that lovely trace entrance of old sided and unfinished Longwood,--a building of such proportions as impressed Zola considerably. I was pleased to chat with Willy somebody who lives there now, as did my old friend "errit" Ward a couple of years ago. I was pleased that Willy didn't mind if we wandered around the house at will, for it gave us a chance to enjoy the furniture I liked, without having to listen to a lot of "tourist talk" which would have greatly cluttered up our enjoyment.

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Thursday, August 15th, 1940. page 2.

At Longwood, I was especially pleased to find a photograph of Ashburn,--a lovely old mansion which used to stand between Arlington, the Winchester House and Auburn, in a park of several acres. It burned a number of years ago. I was likewise enchanted to discover a couple of portraits of Dr. and Mrs. Haller Nutt,--see May 11th, 1940 of this Journal concerning Madam Nutt. I regretted that the oil of Dr. Haller seemed better than that of Mrs. Nutt, but possibly there are better portraits of her that I shall find elsewhere before I am done with her.

From Longwood we ran down the road a little further to Gouscester or rather Gloster Place, the old Winthrop Sargent home. It was a pleasure to roam through it again, and the nice old colors many who has been there so long was good enough to let us ramble as we pleased, up-stairs and down, to enjoy the architectural features and furnishings with its torrents of talk to take off the boom of enjoyment of the individual items which merited attention.

And so, after half an hour, we said goodbye, and took to the big road again, and so around to the Woodville road, where we stopped at Goat Castle, which we found locked,--possibly because Mr. and Mrs. Goat were at dinner, although they may possibly be on a picnic or some such frolic in the immediate neighborhood, for I cannot imagine either of them traveling a far a-field.

By now it was time to think of food, for the cup of coffee at five this morning was beginning to seem infinitely remote.

Through lovely Auburn park, past the sight of the superb sight of the romantic ruins of Sunnyside, which 1st year, a local politician gave to his brother-in-law who tore down the bricks and stone columns and carted them away, and by lovely Auburn itself, the marvelous architectural gem which Dr. Duncan built about 1810, employing the New England architect whose name eludes me now, to include the remarkable staircase which remains one of the wonders of that remarkable architectural era. And so along to St. Catherine's Street, past the old fork of the Roads, where more slaves were sold in Mississippi in ante-bellum days than at any other spot, and by the old slave hospital, and one beyond the former night-club where 210 darkies were suffocated in 20 minutes last winter.

And so back to town, with lunch at the Zola, and thus refreshed, and a couple of cards put in the mail, on out Pine Street and into the country, stopping for a moment to view of ruins of Mr. and Mrs. Swann's old home,--Homewood, and then along the road past Landsdown, and so plunging through the deep cool traces, along the five or six miles to Fine Ridge. We stopped for a few minutes to visit the sweet Presbyterian church and session house on the deeply wood hill, and thence on to Edgewood to call on Marylanbdin, whom I was enchanted to find looking in better health than ever before.



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after half an hour's wait in her lovely drawing room, we felt constrained to get along. Mary said she had not been home when I telephoned this morning, but that Lou, her maid, had told her that "that man who loves old houses" was coming, and so Mary knew that Lou must be referring to me.

Mary promised to get over to Melrose shortly, and promised that in another month or so, when I come over to stay at Edgewood for a while, she has found a couple of old houses,--lost from the world, to show me. I shall certainly be delighted.

And so we took to the big road again, heading back to Pine Ridge, and turning to the left down the Washington Road, passing by Foster's Mound plantation house to observe it for a few moments, and thence passed the Dangerfield place, and so beyond Dr. Affleck's house, and turned into Washington itself where the road intersects in front of the Methodist Church, behind which stands the old home of B. L. C. Wailes.

And thence into the grounds of Jefferson College, and after a glance at the lovely doorways and the grounds, we headed back toward Natchez.

It is about six miles, and gave us a chance to catch our breath, as on passes but few houses, including Devereaux, on the way.

In town, we drove to Chaktow, where at a little after four, we told Felix we would not need the car again until six o'clock, and so sent him on his way, while we mounted the steps to Cherokee, on the opposite side of the street, to call on Myrtie Byrne whom I had telephoned that morning.

Myrtie received us as charmingly as always, and we chatted much of Natchez things, including the latest news of Marshal Brickel, whom she says is now living with his wife again, as they decided upon a reconciliation on the day their impending divorce suit came up for court action. Myrtie understands that he has laid aside his work on his proposed Natchez volume, temporarily at least. She didn't know anything about Mrs. Moore's activities of late, save that she had quit her W.P.A. job. Jeff. Dixon, she understood, was in New York all summer, but was threatening to return to Natchez shortly to resume his exploitation of the Devil's Punch Bowl, and White Apple Village.

About five, we said goodbye, promising to come back again soon, and so walked down the street passed Stanton Hall, more enormous than ever, and so around to call on Mrs. Moore, only to find that she was at the movies. And so back to Main Street, for a hurried look at the old First Bank of Mississippi,--a splendidly restrained classic, columned building and the old banker's mansion behind it. And thence to supper, and much talk before

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August 15th, Thursday, - page 4.

After supper, we found Felix waiting for us, and high in his praises of Natchez which he had explored some on his own hook and had found doubly hospitable when he inquired at a restaurant if they served colored people, and was told by the owner of the place that ~~xxx~~ he should come in and make himself comfortable. Felix is so light a mulatto that I reckon he could "jump his color" if he choose, but he is not the type who would, and accordingly had felt doubly pleased that his frankness in identifying it had been met in such a cordial manner or southern hospitality.

We drove around to the railroad station, so beautifully located on the bluffs, fixed up the ticket, and while awaiting the hour for the train to pull out, walked to the promenade where we could view the beauty of the setting sun beyond the vast plains of Louisiana on the opposite side of the Mississippi.

We found the train almost completely deserted, and a choice of places without restriction. There was a few minutes of last minutes conversation and then goodbye.

I found Felix waiting for me on the promenade, and together we returned to the car, and drove down to Under-The Hill, there to await for fifteen minutes the return of the Ferry from Vidalia on the Louisiana shore. Night was setting in, for the sun was down by seven, and the wonderful luminosity which I have never seen so intense elsewhere, permeated the whole cloudless sky.

As we drew away from the Mississippi shore, the river was as silvery gray and as ~~smooth~~ smooth as a mirror. The levee on the Louisiana side, toward the setting sun was almost black in its shaded hugeness, while glancing back at the Natchez bluffs, the whole shoreline rose like a vast panorama of earth and vegetation which had been washed in a saffron pink by the setting sun. It is the best hour to see Natchez from the river.

Once on the Louisiana side, we mounted the levee and noticed that in the time consumed in crossing, the shadows of night had already assembled, but were somehow more confusing because of the bright moon in the east which was contending with the fading light of the sun to dominate the shades which rushed in as the day withdrew.

For 20 miles we raced through the flat country towards Ferriday, and then turning into the piney woods section and the vast wooded oil fields, we realized that the moon had won the struggle and that henceforth for the next 125 miles the moon would illuminate and soften the long road ahead.

It was after ten before we reached Winfield, and I realized I wouldn't see Aunt Cammie tonight, and it was 11 before we crossed Red River at Grand Core. It was nearly midnight when we passed through Natchitoches and almost 12:30 when we reached Cane River at Bermuda,--the old Cote Joyeuse of ante-bellum days. It was here that I recalled what Sam Brown had told me about the meetings of the "So-Sayshon", for the little St. Paul's church was lighted, and knots of negroes in white, dotted the bypaths and roadsides in the neighborhood. The sound of hymnals at midnight came floating out over the river, and the raucous note of lascivious velvety laughter trickled in from without the church. The "So-Sayshon" was obviously a success.



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August 15th, 1940 - Thursday, page 5 or 6.

Shortly after leaving Bermuda, and crossing the Cane River Bridge in front of the Alphonse Fradhomme house, we encountered several cars of merry-makers, coming from down Melrose way. Felix said Felix said that the Priests were sponsoring a dance tonight,-- the Holy Name Society,--which was being given at Ashly Kinkland's. He said that these cars were probably ~~xxxxxxx~~ those who had left the party early, and that the dance itself would probably last rather late, for Ashly's dance hall and saloon is a popular place for such parties, and business is usually good when attendance is backed up by the power of the clerks.

As we reached the place, it was approaching one o'clock. the dancers were in that peculiar state of enthusiasm which come about when the music has been good and the ~~xx~~ bar has been busy. Felix asked if I minded if we stop for a moment. I was all in favor of it, and enchanted at this opportunity to see the mulattoes in complete freedom which probably comes only when they are dominant in numbers, for as near as I could see, there were no negroes present, I believe I was the only white.

The dance hall is a single, cottage like building, with windows running all around the long low building,--with the openings screen and the windows themselves removed. The lights had been turned out,--supposing they may have been lighted earlier in the evening, and perhaps 50 or 75 couples were dancing within the building. Outside there were possibly a hundred mulattoes, laughing and talking or watching these within. Across the road a line of China berry trees,--almost black in the full glow of the moon lead to the saloon where mulatto bar men were doing a moderate but steady business. Beyond this building Cane River gleamed in the moonlight. Someone came along with Ashlyey, the owner of the place. He is a personable young mulatto, who married some of the Jones money. He was presented, and we chatted together for a few moments. About this time an attractively dressed mulatress standing beside a rather smart looking roadster, became to say unpleasant things to a youth who stood some distance away. She denounced him for having spoiled a love affair for her and called him a properate if unmentionable names. Her voice was so shrill everyone on the place could hear her. Half apologetic, but withal quite swavely, Ashly bowed to me, asking how I like that. I replied that this was my first visit to a Holy Name affair, but that what I had heard rather exceeded my expectations. One or two of the mulattoes laughed vaguely, and I added that it seemed curious how infrequently one really ran across a lady, although I had thought the Holy Name business might offer something more than I had heard. The young person slammed the door of the roaster and drove off.

Sometime later, the dancers wended of the waltz, and Felix and I said goodnight to our host and drove down the road toward home. I asked Felix, who had gathered up Whang and another youth at the dance to drive me to Cane River bridge, which I had crossed each night thus far this week on foot. He said he had seen me.

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Thursday, August 15th, page 6 or 7.

And so at the far end of the bridge, he let me out, and the youth from Derban who disappeared down the moon-flooded Montrose lane.

I sat for a time on the bridge, thinking over my day, and wondering upon the marvel of a mid-summer's night when all the elements of nature seem fused into a single whole and the hands of eternity seem suspended for that eon which stretches from mid-night until dawn.

A dog bayed far away down the river, and in its wake came the unending cycle of chanteclair's watchmen of the night. Hard by, behind Bill's saloon a cock crowed lustily, and up towards Zeline's another picked up the message. And so along the river into infinity passed the cry of the night watch, and circling to the east and south it came back in gradual increasing volume. A fire-fly twinkled in the great sycamore by the bridge head and a chorus of frogs announce possession of the world.

I was tired as I started home across the bridge, and I was almost asleep, it seemed as I passed the garaged, the mule barn, the school house and the gray, ~~xx~~ weather stain Melrose store,--made new and silvery in the night.

Theodors of Araby floated silently through the gardens as I moved silently through the patches of moonlight and velvety shade. Back of the great oak the big house slept silently, and circling it I stopped at Winter Quarters for fresh clothes I would wear on awakening. The house exuded perfumes from flowers Aunt Cammie had placed there during my absence and fresh Pacific Duck curtains, newly fashioned, hung from my balcony to make an extra room of the areaway below.

When I came out again into the moonlight, Grandpa was waiting for me on my gallery, and together we crossed in front of the African, ~~xx~~ House, more ethereal and unreal than ever, and so through the gate to Summer Quarters, to find a great bank of Milk and Wine lilies in the fireplaces of the bed room and library, and a heady spray or two of tube roses on the console beside my bed. I don't remember undressing but I do recall that Grandpa beat me to bed.



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August 16th, 1940. - Friday.

It was nice to wake up at five this morning when Frank arrived with coffee.

He wanted to talk. I wanted to listen.

His wife hadn't come back. He felt that she wanted to because he loved her and he knew that she loved him, but her people wouldn't let her come back.

Henry, he said, hadn't spoken to him since Monday. Friday it is his custom to perform certain courtesies that evolve to Henry's benefit. Even though Henry hadn't spoken to him this week, he would carry out this Friday custom. I thought that was a good idea.

Somehow the news of Monday night had leaked out, so that the people at the store knew about it. I was disappointed to learn that, but was glad to be appraised. I would speak to Henry today about keeping the lid down. I'm afraid that will be singing psalms to a dead horse.

Breakfast, and a little mail, when Aunt Cammie came over a little after eight. There was much to be talked about, since a whole day had elapsed since last we were together.

We worked on the manuscript a little, and then came coffee, and along with coffee came the mail. The letters were few but worth while. The printed material was grand, including a booklet from Manhattan on Asylum, with lots of pictures and a fine map of this half-forgotten old aristocratic town,--built by the French refugees of the Revolution on the banks of the Susquehanna in upper Pennsylvania, where came such visitors shortly after its inception as the "rice de Tallyrand, the Duke of Liancourt, the Noailles and other great names of the Ancient Regime. The place has always fascinated scholars, and even for the layman it had some appeal, since it was here a great house was built for Marie Antoinette whom they hoped to rescue from prison and bring to the comparative safety of the wilderness, as this region was in the late 1790s. I was just as pleased, too, as I realized the memory and foresight or rather the alertness of the donor who certainly of all people merits the double L's, whether it stand for Lydia Lee of Lyme or Lady of the Lamp.

After dinner I had a chat with Henry. He said that on Monday night Frank had treated his wife roughly, both in criticism and in manhandling, and that he had torn her clothes off. And that it was because of this that she had left him. He said that Frank had made unpleasant insinuations as to intimate relations between his wife and Henry and between his daughter and Henry while being exceedingly intoxicated. He seemed greatly wounded over these insinuations, Henry did. This later rather astonished me since Henry, a man of 60 has certainly been about much, and surely must have long ago learned to discount certain unreasonable things done and said by people who lose their heads while intoxicated. His pity for Frank's wife for the physical treatment she received is one thing but I fail to appreciate Henry's vast outrage over Frank's words.

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At best I could merely concil. I pointed out how easily things, as he well knew, grapevined from the lower orders to the seats of the mighty, and how easily, in trying to chop down one statue, he might easily topple himself from his own base by the ensuing crash. I also pointed out to him that he owed it to the Madam to keep this matter quiet, since he knew perfectly well that she had enough on her hands without having this purely personal matter thrust upon her. He promised that he would say nothing but I knew full well as he solemnly swore that he most certainly would not keep his word.

And so this disturbance sweeps on. Its approach seemed so inevitable a week or so back, and yet at this writing, the end seems to remote, -- if indeed there be any, --and the chance so great that people outside the three immediately concern may be drawn in.

I saw Frank just before supper. He was depressed. He had had a drink. He hadn't eaten anything for a day or two.

I did what I could by way of comfort in one form and another, but felt that even my admonition for him to relinquish liuids in favor of solids wouldn't carry much weight with it. And so we said goodnight.

Supper and afterward three quarters of an hour in the garden with Aunt Cammie who vigorously thinned out the cannas which are now in full bloom, amazing in numbers and variety of colors, with a height of their great, fleur-de-lys-like flower some 7 or 8 feet above the ground.

Afterward we returned to the big house and read from material which has come to us that day in the mail,--and at eight we said goodnight and by five minutes after, I was asleep in bed.



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Saturday, August 17th, 1940.

The day started on a little brighter key, for Frank, although looking exhausted, spoke of the possibility that his wife might come up to Church on the morrow, and if she did, he felt she would come back home, instead of continuing up the road to her mama and papa. For his physical and well as his spiritual sake, I hope so, for he is obviously falling away rapidly.

Aunt Cammie came over early, and together we worked on the manuscript steadily until after eleven, save for a couple of interruptions,--one while we drank coffee at ten o'clock and another a half hour later when Mat, while mowing the lawn in front of Lyle's house where we were working, stopped in his well measured labor to observe the cause of the great the blue jays were making in the weekping-ebm tree. He found a reptile of the chicken so called variety, which had just swallowed a jay, and calling for help, watched Frank knock the thing to the ground with a hoe, and so dispose of it.

There were a couple of guest for dinner, but people of no especial interest, who left immediately after dinner was done.

Aunt Cammie and I continued with our work,--and Mat with his, in the neighborhood of Dr. Miller's cabin, where he found another item, exactly like the one he had discovered in the morning, but the afternoon's was in vines under the ~~XXXX~~ eaves of the cabin. Cold winter must be coming, the darkies say, when reptiles start moving toward the house.

I walked over to Zeline's in the afternoon, chatting with her for half an hour, and so back around the river road as far as the church, where I found that the painting was pretty well in hand,--on its up-ward journey, for now the men had reached the ~~x~~ steeple, and people beyond my vision were hammering at a scaffolding, although from their voices I recognised Joe Chevalier and Edward's among the others. I didn't see any priests about. I reckon they must have told them the proper way to put up scaffolding on the steeple without bothering to risks their necks to see that it was properly done.

Back home for supper, and afterward an hour and a half of reading from material which had arrived in yesterday's mail. I didn't seem so very sleepy last night, but tonight I was. And yet, even after going to bed at eight, I awoke within half an hour and didn't get back again until after eleven.

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August 18th, 1940 - Sunday.

Another beautiful day, and one full of anticipation for whatever happiness it may bring in Frank's family.

I was interested to learn that certain members of Frank's family, living several miles from Melrose, had paid him a visit on Saturday night, by way of expressing condolence, I suppose. I am under the impression that in the case of at least one of them, there may be little genuine hope that a reconciliation may be effected. How busy last night must have been at Melrose.

Aunt Cammie and I worked during the morning together until the family blew in, when all work ceases.

Dinner was early,--around 11:30. As we were having coffee, Mary noticed a moccasin in the garden outside the screen in the summer dining room Frank took care of it. The darkies must be right about cold weather, and I must say that even the radio today predicted a cool wave from the Rockies.

I spent a good share of the afternoon at correspondence in which I am frightfully behind, and the balance of it in chatting ~~xxxx~~ with little friends who called on me between innings during Pat's afternoon baseball game. They are all practicing hard for a match between Melrose team and Magnolia team sometime early in the week.

By four o'clock all the family left, and five o'clock found Aunt Cammie, Pat and me having supper alone. It was rather fun, and much more conducive to a Sabbath evening in spirit.

Frank had left early,--depressed because his wife had not appeared at church, and there were few little chores for Pat and the rest of us to ~~xxxxxx~~ attend to before reading at seven for an hour ~~txxxx~~ and thence to bed.

I nearly forgot to record, that Sam Brown had reported to me yesterday that Mrs. Elam Brown had insisted on killing a hog, in spite of the fact that she had no means of salting it down. Her neighbors tried to get her to sell it, but she wouldn't do it, even though J. H. or somebody would have given her a fair price for it, and she would be able to buy more food than the fast decomposing hog would provide. Say had this to say: "If you snatch a hog in this hot weather, and kills it with that grass belly and all, it'll sure make you sick. Looks like that woman ain't got no sense 't all, or else she jus' wan' to kill herself an chillen.

One thing is certain, Madam Brown hasn't much sense. It was only today that I learned her name before she took up with Elam these five or six or ten years ago. In those days her actual name was Nina Machet.



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August 19th, 1940, Monday.

I awoke last night about 10 o'clock, to the tune of great bombers passing low over the house. I stepped out into the night to look at them,--the moon was up, but somewhat faded. The enormous great machines were almost the color of the sky, and somehow seemed like a piece of it, detached from the more remote zenith, and sent scurrying along the lower blue, traveling in the direction of the night, and almost an integral part of it. Their deep, thundering roar was awesome, and I easily pictured what these great engineering wonders meant in other sections of the world where instead of passing away into the night, they wheeled back and loosed a "ghastly dw" of death and destruction.

Morning, and a ray of hope in Frank's voice, although he wife hand't come home. He was going to talk x things over with J. H. today, possibly.

My teeth were chattering so loudly, however, I scarcely caught his words, for I had ~~awakened~~ awakened in the night to the realization that the blast from the North had swept down upon us, bringing a drop in temperature that belied the season. I had awakened about 4 o'clock, shaking with cold, and wondering if I should get up and make use of the quilt in the armchair, ~~xxx~~ and in doing so freeze before getting back into bed, or if perhaps it wouldn't be better just to stay where I was and shiver the night through. The latter course of least resistance won. Of course for the first night in weeks, Grandpa hadn't come to bed with me so I was even without the aid and comfort of his warmth on my feet.

But with the coffee, piping hot, I got back my warmth, and before seven I was bathed and dressed and in the big road for a good swing down the lane with more ozone in the air and more vitality in my bones that I had felt in many a day.

I went as far as town, but didn't remain long, starting back toward Melrose when Nell Glass came along in her car, and stopped for me.

I was glad to accept her invitation, and we covered the 20 miles well before 10 o'clock. As she was going on some errands for the Relief Agency, and had often before asked me if I would care to visit some of her people on such a trip, I was glad of this opportunity to accept, and so we headed south toward Derry and Cloutierville.

I had long wanted to see the emplacement of the old Marco house which is off in this region, particularly as it was a beautiful house, as many of the fan windows and fine doors and openings in the houses at Melrose came from this fine old plantation home.

We drove for miles along the old plantation road,--formerly all on Marco property, among the bed of what once was Red River before it changed its ~~course~~ course. Cane River in the 1830's. Here, early in the 19th century old Marco had come from Czechoslovakia,--or Austria-Hungary in those days, carved himself out a fine plantation and built himself a remote but magnificent home in the far reaches of this Louisiana cotton country. As the years rolled along Marco became richer and richer, and with his plantation running along the river front for miles, he shipped not only his cotton but

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but also the cotton of certain of his neighbors, including that of Robert McAlpin, with whom he had dealings. It will be recalled that Robert McAlpin was the Simon Legree of Uncle Tom's Cabin, and that Aunt Cammie saved his cotton stencil from the ruins of the Marco house, and now has it preserved at Melrose.

We had a flat along this old foresake road, and it was difficult to imagine that only a few hours before I had found the weather so chilly, but the tires were quickly changed, and we were on our way again.

We called on several families, living in poor cabins, and in each case with money providing transportation to Shreveport, some 125 miles away where some member of the family could have an operation free at the Charity Hospital in that city.

For the most part the people, both white and black, seemed appreciative of the assistance being given them. I was interested to learn what Nell thought of the Federal Relief Project from the intimate angle from which she viewed it. She said she couldn't imagine how relief of this nature could ever be cut down, pointing out that in European countries it had been taken as a matter of course for years and that America, either because of its economic set up or because it was utterly impossible in this section, at least, for people to provide for emergencies, nothing else could be done, unless the people were left to die. I concurred with her in her expression of amazement that so few of those in this section, who are blessed with earthly goods, seem to comprehend the human needs and the human necessities involved in this matter.

Between Monett's Ferry and Cloutierville we stopped for a few moments in front of the little one room cabin of Herod and Easter, two old darkies who live there with their daughter Joy Lee and her four children. Herod came out to talk with us. As he can't work, being too old, he must pay rent, and that comes first from his relief check. Next comes food, and after that shoes and clothes for winter, if the money will stretch that far. Somehow the conversation got off on religion, and Herod spoke of the services they are to have shortly at St. Mary's on the bayou. He attends this church with Easter, and he says he is one of its best singers. He says, however, that he is best in singing for the sick. When folks is a-dyin', they calls for Herod. He's good a moanin' low. Some times Sisters, when they're a-passing will should: "Herod, moan dat lower, Herod. Jus' you keep on a-moanin' low." and thus Herod helps them from this world into the next.

Once, a number of years ago, he went to Alexandria to see the Divine Healer there. He gave him, for a consideration, some These gave Herod a lift. For before then, if a person was sick, he'd just rub and rub until the sickness came out of them into him. But now with these prayin' sticks, he just has to lay them on the part that's aillin', and then start a-prayin' and a-moanin' low, and the sickness leaves the patient and disappears into the praying stick.

Herod seems a little cracked on religion, and yet there



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and yet I imagine that Herod does a lot of good in projecting his faith into the hearts of the simple folk who pay him a measure of consideration for his simple faith, and I must say if it came to a choice for me, I feel I would get less comfort from those Prayin' Sticks of the Melrose Church who for a consideration, hand out extreme unction, according to Rome, in their remote and hocus-pokus mumblings than I would from the curious yet appealing faith of Herod, his prayin' sticks, and his moanin' low.

We stopped at Magnolia for a moment on our way back, and before one we were at Melrose.

In the afternoon, Aunt Gammie and I made up for lost time on the manuscript, and after supper we read from Sydnor's Slavery until 8 o'clock.

I had intended coaxing Grandpa home with me, on leaving the big house, but he was waiting for me on the doorstep.

I had thought of retiring early and I did, but not to sleep immediately,--there were so many things to think about, simple folk nearer home, and old Herod a moanin' low.

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Tuesday, August 20th, 1940.

Continued cool we ther, with a heavy blanket, supplemented by Grandpa at my feet was not too much. Curious collection of weather for this year, I should say,--snow in February, and colder than records covering 50 years, rain in July exceeding in spread and volume anything that has gone before, and now in the midst of August when the full blast of summer ought to be ripening cotton, the thermometer tumbling to unimagined lows

Frank's problem isn't solved as yet. He dare not go to see his wife, as her father has said that he would shot him if he set foot in the yard. Ther is some sort of need for the projection that goes along with the presence of a white man at such times. Possibly we can get some sort of a contact established between husband and wife shortly.

While getting out my mail this morning, Sam Brown came

Sam Brown, in attending to some detail about the house, asking me if I could tell him something. He said he had seen pictures in the paper from the war, and it looked like men coming down from a rope and tackle out of the sky with something white over their head that looked plum like a big wing,--and I could I tell him what it was and how they did it and what for.--I gathered that Sam had seen pictures of parachuteists, but as for telling him why, in this day and age, people should be performing thus was rather too vast a question for me.

Aunt Gammie and I worked on the manuscript in the morning, and after dinner resumed our labors until after three.

Shortly after coffee time, Frank came to see me. He said he had spoken to J. H. about his problem,--for J. H. had known about it through the maid, Frank's daughter, and J. H. wanted Frank to write his wife a letter, telling her to come home, etc. Since Frank can't write, and as he probably wanted it to be typewritten to give it a suggestion of Melrose backing behind it, I undertook the job. It's a pity I didn't make a copy of this restrained appeal as from a mulatto to his wife, and trying to make it sound as though Frank had dictated it, which he hadn't since the mere fact that I sat down at the typewriter, oised to strike off whatever he might say, seemed to render him speechless,--thereby forcing me to do the composing as well as the writing.

In the evening, Aunt Gammie and I read for an hour, and afterward I folded up my beard within a few minutes from the time I quitted the big house.



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Tuesday, August 21st, 1940.

I started this date line but have apparently filed it under the date of August 12th, instead of August 21st, and so I must refer to that page for my activities in the morning, which included an account of Aunt Cammie sending Frank to her armoire in the big house to get money to take to the priests, asking them to say a Mass for the return of Frank's wife. I engaged to visit Zeline in the afternoon to get her to burn candles to the same end.

About three o'clock, I accordingly called on Zeline, and found her entertaining a girl friend, and chatting with Joe, as her nimble fingers kept close to the sewing as she chatted and chuckled at her work.

Before I had been there but a few moments, Zeline, laid aside her sewing for a few moments, and disappearing in the other room, returned with a great slab of watermelon which she served me. The others had apparently finished theirs just before I had arrived. Frankly, I wasn't very hungry, but somehow one can always find a place for good will morsels when served by someone like Zeline.

On leaving I said goodbye to Joe and the guest, and asked Zeline to walk with me as far as the first gate in her front yard. On the way I told her about my wish that she burn candles for Frank's wife to return to him.

She told me that she would, but that I must urge him to stop fussing at his wife, for, according to Zeline, when "son" as she calls him, has been drinking, he fusses at her too much, and is inclined to be mean. I promised to do my part.

Zeline said she would burn the candles at the church, and she would let me know if the omen was good or bad, for if it were

good, the candles would flame up in a spurt as soon as she lighted them. If they merely burned in a small steady flame, the omen would not be good.

I slipped enough silver in her hand to enable her to select a good candle.--I don't know as there is any especial choice, other than that of selecting one which has been blessed, making it more valuable.--or at least more expensive.--which is the same thing, I suppose in the mind of those curious priests, and so I returned home.

There I found Frank awaiting me. He looked down-hearted. He said he had gone to see the priest, the old fellow from Duquesnes, and that the Reverend Father told him he wouldn't say any mass for him, for it was better if his wife and child never came back to him, since he had never really been married to the child's mother, since being married by a Judge cut no ice in the Church. Besides he was already married to another woman.--Tony and May's mother, but of course that wife, having left Frank years ago for a negro, and subsequently raised another brood of her own, Frank could scarcely hope for her return. He seemed dumb-founded and stunned.

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Wednesday, August 21st, 1940.

It was cold last night. Everyone says it is the coldest August on record. I don't know anything about the record, but I know that with a quilt over me, I was still cold, and Grandpa didn't come in to sleep on my feet until 5:20 this morning which was not much help for the preceding hours.

I knocked off a flock of letters before Aunt Cammie came to dictate at eight thirty when I dashed out with the mail, including several air-mail letters, only to find the postman had come and gone.

Back to Lyle's house with the Madam who was already turning through the mail which Sam had brought her during my absence. We ran through it hurriedly, pausing only to ponder upon the meaning of some of the phrases which seemed conatured more with an idea of confusing than enlightening.

With the letters out of the way, we began on the Diary. It was a good morning to work.--plenty of ozone in the air and sufficient energy to make things zip along.

But after a few lines, Charles Mazurette's niece dropped by to sit for possibly a quarter of an hour.

And then we got back to the Diary. But not for long, since Mary appeared shortly bearing the mid-morning coffee tray well in advance of mid-morning. There was plantation talk for a few minutes, and then the coffee, and so back to the opus of B. L. C. Wiles.

We did a paragraph or two, uninterruptedly, when another figure appeared. It was Frank. He had seen his wife at Mr. Edgars' where the latter and his wife and enticed her for a rendezvous with Frank on the pretext of having laundry for her to do.

It seems she told Frank she wanted to come back to him but her family wouldn't let her. She said, however, that if he would sell his live stock and things and move far away from her family some such place as New Orleans, she would gladly slip away from home to join him. Both the Madam and I chorused: "Nothing doin'".

And then Aunt Cammie, in her best blue-stockings-Presbyterian manner through out a suggestion that she pay for a Mass to be said in the Catholic Church for the uniting of Frank with his wife. Frank snapped at it, to my surprise, for I hadn't realized the faith in his mother church was so great in his mind. The Madam told him where he would find her pocket book, in her armoire in her room, and that he should go and get the money for the Mass and go to see the Priest at once. She also said she would give Zeline some money to go and burn a candle on the same subject. I calimed that right, since I felt I ought to have a little share in the business, and besides, Aunt Cammie had the Mass to her credit already.



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August 21st, - Tuesday. page 2 or 3.

I was furious that these old coppers should get so fancy about husbands and wives not being married, and all that sort of non-sense which might bear some water in circles on a different cultural and intellectual plain than in this particular locality, but certainly out of place in the present instance. One of those Straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel" things which stupid worshippers of "Man made for Law" things.

I instinctively quoted Margaret Mitchell with a "Fiddlesticks", and said it didn't make any difference whether the old fellow would say a mass or not, for Zeline had promised to burn candles,--if Frank would do his part and promise not to fuss any more,--and that I knew well enough that candles burned by somebody good and kind and understanding like Zeline would cut ten times more ice in Heaven than all the silly business those old priests could ever do or not do in a million years.

His attack on the clergy seemed to cheer Frank up a little, and so I told him a couple of other tales about their stupidity on a more domestic footing which appealed to him even more, so that before he had left, he was smiling, and manifesting faith in the good work Zeline had promised to do for him.

Supper and afterward a little tour of the garden and then some reading until eight, and thence to bed.

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Wednesday, August 22nd, 1940.

Another beautiful clear day, with everything seemingly in tune with Creation except the poor Frank whose dejection seems to have terminated his eating entirely. He went home sick a little after nine, and a Dr. was summoned to prescribe. Obviously less liquids and more substantial solid foods,--a relief from worry brought about by his wife's return and a lessening of the nervous tension which I suppose goes along with any job.

It was a busy day at Fairbairn, with plenty of work in the morning, a good mail, and a pleasant, limited gathering at dinner.

In the afternoon guests came for a day or so,--Agnew Field and his wife, from Atlanta. He had been here before, having visited the place first in 1912, at a time when Aunt Cammie signed a statement of responsibility to get him out of an institution for the deranged,--much to the consternation of the rest of the world.

The darkies find his name difficult,--or did, until they discovered that it was Mr. Avenue, and so hence forth they have managed it very nicely.

Mr. Field is a composite picture of an American Kiwanis or Rotary member,--lots of energy, lots of tepid good will for everybody, considerably concerned about his own immediate interests, which, for the most part, center around a rather transparent and uninspiring wife, to whom he referred to three or four times in one day as the one woman in the world to whom he owed his success and inspiration. I thought this statement before Aunt Cammie was either a little thoughtless or a little understatement, since, after all, if it hadn't been for Aunt Cammie who got him out of an asylum and gave him the rest and quiet so needed for his recuperation, and the enthusiasm to live, he probably would never have stumbled over his present wife, who, in reality is No. 2 and only of 4 or 5 years standing.

In the evening, he asked me to ride down to Fanny Chopin Guillot's with him and his wife. Somehow I got jockeyed into the business, but just how I am not certain, although Aunt Cammie had something to do about it, and was laughing up her sleeve at me as I accused her of it when the Fields weren't around.

I enjoyed talking to Miss Fanny Guillot, however, and it was interesting to hear her speak of the old days when she went to school near Notre Dame,--St. Catherine's I believe the place was called, in its female department. She also spoke of the Studebakers who lived at their lovely country home, Sunnyside, near the school. Unfortunately she never had heard how that family crashed up in the collapse of the Studebaker fortune.

I talked for a while with Miss Fanny's son, Nat, who had been a member of Capt. Whittlesley's Lost Battalion during the 1914-1918



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Thursday, August 22nd, 1940. - page 2.

Mat Guillot could remember many things about the circumstances of the Battalion which I needed freshening up on. I shall try to talk with him again.

We came back home a little after eight, and shortly after we retired,--at least I did, leaving Agnew talking with Aunt Camie about his success in organizing clam bakes, etc., which I felt sure Aunt Cammie would cut short ere long.

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Friday, August 23rd, 1940.

Another grand day, with cotton ripening and the darkies getting on their toes in contemplation of the possibility of cotton picking starting next Monday.

There was the mail in the morning, but even before that there was 5 o'clock coffee as an eye opener, and I almost feel out of bed as I realized that it wasn't Frank standing beside my bed, but rather was Rugabou, of all people, whom I hadn't seen since he drove us over to Natchez one cold day during the Winter.

It was fun to talk with him a little and listen to him gigue, but somehow it wasn't quite the same cup of coffee or the same starting of the day.

After dinner, Aunt Camie and I continued our work, for we hadn't been able to do much in the morning, thanks to the Fields lingering on until after 11 o'clock before making up their minds to start home via Mississippi. I had offered to tell them some nice roads around Natchez whence they were headed, but I soon discovered that anything but big cement highways would be of no interest to them and the main roads are easy enough to find without me elucidating on hidden traces. Besides, Mr. Aenue merely wanted to go to Natchez to get to Port Gibson, so he could show his wife where he had gone to school thirty years or so before. Of course he doesn't know that the building has burned down in the mean time, but as Aunt Cammie explained to me in an aside, --That's alright too. "

And after the Fields had left, Dr. Ambrose Hertzog, who is visiting his mother, Miss Sally at Magnolia for a few days of his vacation from Eau Claire in Wisconsin, called to take movies in color. Among other things he wanted to take were humming birds and Aunt Cammie, and I believe he got them both, although under protest from the Madam.

After dinner I continued the Wailes business with Aunt Cammie until three when I went over to see Frank. I found him in his neat little cabin, lying in bed by the open window, and looking somehow rested or relaxed on the white, white sheets. His two daughters, May and Mary were there when I arrived, but they left shortly thereafter to go call on Frank's wife, to urge her to return. Mary's little girls staid behind in the cabin with Frank and me. I liked to hear them talk at their play, for their voices were musical and somehow more soft than white children of that tender age of 2 or three when they get excited.

Afterwards, I continued down the lane, across the bridge and around to Felix's house with a view of getting my hair cut, but I was out of luck, as Felix and Pearl weren't home, although Whang had seen me from the saloon gallery as I crossed the bridge, and he came down the road behind me to explain where Felix had gone, and to sit on the gallery in the fresh reeze and entertain me a bit.



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Friday, - page 2, - August 23rd, 1940.

Back home before five and a little gradening with Aunt Cammie befor supper, after which we got on with our reading which we had had to forego the night before. We had some good reading from Sydnor and from a volume, The Southerner Discovers New England, with sections of the book regarding the Madcowell Foundation in Peterboro of especial interest. I realized for the first time that the 81 year old widow of the composer is still interested in the foundation to the extent of giving concerts around the United States in raising funds to bring the place back to the position it held previous to the devastating storm of 1938 which nearly wrecked that place, where the rest of that region was all torn and washed asunder.

According to report Karl Karmar has been spending a few months there this summer of 1940, working on a new novel, scheduled to possibly bear the title of The White Rainbow, being a story about an itinerant painter in central New York about the middle of the last century. I suppose he ran across much material of this nature in his research for The Hudson, where he has an excellent chapter on these painters.

And so a little after 8, to bed.

And yet somehow I couldn't sleep, but I did get around to dream land eventually.

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Saturday, August 24th, 1940.

In spite of a night that wasn't too freighted with sleep, and withal fairly weary, I responded to Fugabou's good morning, and staggered through an indifferent cup of coffee.

But by six o'clock the world was right side up again, and before seven I was bathed and dressed and out in the big road. It was still cool, although the sky was cloudless and shortly the sun would have things pretty near the boiling point.

I strode down the Montrose road at a good clip, but after reaching the end of it, I saw Bill Jones who stopped and asked me to ride to town with him which I did, wanting to do a little shopping for high-ho silver books, etc.

I started to walk back toward the edge of town, when Harold came along, and invited me to ride toward Montrose with him, as he was going as far as Natchez, La., but I demurred in favor of Bill who came along shortly thereafter.

Aunt Cammie and I ran through the mail, which was rather curious in spots, and hence to our manuscript, and so the morning ran its course.

After dinner, we resumed our work until about three, when, after lemonade, I went over to call on Zeline, for this morning, Fugabou reported to me that Frank's wife had returned during the night to him, and I knew Zeline would be interested to learn about it.

When I arrived, Zeline, after greeting me, said I would be glad to know that she had had good luck with her candles and that they had flared when she burned them yesterday. I assured her that the omen was indeed correct and that a few hours after she had burned the offerings, the husband and wife had been re-united. She, of course, chuckled,--in a manner that always leaves one uncertain if she is really pleased or whether she may not be laughing at the whole performance, and so invited me in.

We chatted for half an hour, when Edward arrived, and as I had my camera with me, I took his picture, which he wanted to have taken, posing, as he wished to, holding his rifle.

On my way back I stopped at the church and convent, hoping to get a good shot at that whole set up,--master painters, and all, painting from the ground upwards, but the whole crew had knocked off for the day. I did get a nice picture of the Cane River bridge, I think, and so home for supper, after which we read, and I dived into my downy couch.



601

Sunday, August 25th, 1940.

The heat has returned and even the coolness of dawn held promise of evaporating before sunrise.

Fugabou arrived at 5:30. He told me that Frank's wife had returned home. That is certainly a step toward harmony at Melrose. Fugabou told me other things, too, and not all of them were enthusiasms for Henry.

I had a long breakfast, and afterwards made a round of the white garden for Milk and Wine lilies and through the west garden in search of butterfly lilies.

Aunt Cammie came over about 8:30. Henry had told her all the particulars regarding what happened on Monday night, a week back, when he took Frank and his wife to town. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ He also told her that because of Frank the car had gone into the ditch and the repairs on it would amount to \$12.50. When he told me the story, the damage to the car was \$2.30,--so it seems the damages have been mounting as Henry's promises have declined.

We remarked upon all the meaning implied in the word plantation, and how unlike the picture which visitors from other sections of the country have in mind when they explain, in visiting Melrose, that plantation life is so wonderful, with nothing to worry about and nothing to do all day but sit on the front gallery and drink Mint Julips.

A little after eleven the family started arriving, ending manuscript labors for the day.

Dinner was chiefly characterized by excellent food and political discussion, and the necessity of controlling a few votes if anyone wanted to land a job in the State Normal School, with Aunt Cammie voicing the shame of a system which had to choose its intellectual leaders on the basis of how many votes the various applicants could control.

I worked all afternoon, save for five minutes when Harry brought me some ice and coca-cola, ~~xxxxxx~~. It seems that Joe had arrived from Beaumont, Texas, and would stay until Friday when he would take Pat as far as Houston, and then put him on a train for Brownsville.

Supper at six, and before we were done, Frank appeared, looking rather smart in a new hat, but rather peaked in health. It was good to see how happy the return of his wife and child had effected him, in much the same manner that any undue excitement tends to eliminate illness if the patient is of the verge of recovery.

I went back to my desk after supper, and worked until nine, with only a few minutes out to say good night to Aunt Cammie when she dropped by about sun down.

602

Monday, August 26th, 1940.

It was good to awaken this morning to the sound of Frank's step on the brick pavement of the gallery outside. The coffee was perfect as usual, and all in all the day ~~so~~ got started right.

He told me that his wife had sent the little boy with his two daughters when they called at her papa's home the other day, to urge her to return. As her papa was not at home, she thought by sending the little boy, she would thus be free to pack up her things and get away from her mama the more readily. It seems the departure worked just right.

There was only one fly in the ointment. She had gone to Church on Sunday morning, and her papa was the e, but he wouldn't speak to her or even look at her. I observed that possibly that wasn't such a bad idea either.

In the morning, Aunt Cammie and I worked together, and continued our labors after dinner until 3 o'clock.

After lemonade, I headed for Felix's house for a hair cut. On the way I met old Joe, Zelien's husband. We chatted for a moment in the shade of a big sycamore on the bank of Cane River, for the day was hot, and both Joe's horse and I were somewhat cozy.

I asked Joe how the painting was coming along on the Church. He chuckled, and said he thought they were still at it. He also told me that more than one parishoner objected to the manner of the current set of clergy. For himself, he said that Flavite, the cook for the Holy Fathers, had asked Joe the other day if he had anything which she would give her poor chickens which she keeps somewhere in the neighborhood. Joe told her that he had some ears of corn which, although wet, could be fed to the chickens and which they would probably like. He accordingly brought it to her kitchen, and helped her in cutting it off the cob with a knife. As they were in the midst of this chore, the old priest came out into the kitchen, saw them cutting the kernels from the cob, and instantly told them that they didn't know how to remove corn from the cob and that he would show them. Taking the cob away from Joe, he began turning it in his hands, as though to shell it, but of course, with the ears so damp, not a kernel came off. Joe and Flavite both chuckled up their sleeves as the cleric turned in disgust from the kitchen and back to his other endeavors,--if any.

It was warm on the road to Felix's, but there was a nice breeze on the gallery and I enjoyed sitting there for a few moments while Felix, who had been picking cotton, came to perform his tonsorial arts on me. We chatted for a few moments, and then after a good hair cut, and considerably cooled off, I made my way slowly back to Melrose. Supper at 6 and bed at eight.



603

Tuesday, August 27th, 1940.

Full summer heat has returned, with little coolness before sun-up and none at all afterward.

The sky this morning was cloudless and of a blue that hinged on lead color.

Aunt Cammie came over early and we worked as best we could, considering numerous interruptions until about eleven o'clock.

I spent the rest of the morning sorting out the various volumes we had completed on the Diary.

We tried to do a little work after dinner, but interruptions soon put an end to our efforts, and when J. H. left for New Orleans a little after one, we gave up all idea of continuing our joint labors for the day.

At lemonade time, Joe came to visit me, while Frank was pouring my second glass. Joe asked us what we had been talking about.

Frank withdrew shortly, and Joe said he had come to pay me a visit and have a little chat. He asked how the radio was playing and turned it on to a measure of volume exceeding the usual loudness. I tried to continue the conversation although I soon discovered that either Joe was listening to the music and didn't want to miss a note or else my voice wasn't successfully drowning out the programme, and so I gave up trying. Seemingly restless, Joe sought further entertainment elsewhere, leaving the program going full blast. I accordingly choked it and went to myself.

I had told Bud that I might come by the cotton fields down along the river during the afternoon, and I accordingly headed in that direction, with a good breeze tempering the full heat of the sun, and blowing up little clouds of dust at every step I made in the powder-like surface of the lane.

After going a little ways, I heard Bud calling to me from a huge cotton field, although I couldn't see him, what with his shortness and the height of the cotton, but I followed the sound of his voice and eventually established contact.

Bud explained that so few of the bolls were open as yet that only the old fellows like himself, the children and the "lady-folks" were picking this early, but that the younger men and maidens would be starting in another week or so.

As I walked through the thick cotton plants, I felt heavy thuds against my legs, and looking down, discovered that it was the unopened bolls, looking much the size, shape and color of a bud of a water lily, possibly three inches long, and firmly attached to the stick-like stalk of the plant.

After making a couple of rows with Bud, I continued along the river road, turning off at the first turn-row which leads to the bayou and toward little river. After walking three-quarters

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Tuesday, August 27th, 1940 - page 2

between endless rows of cotton, I sighted someone on horseback coming down the lane toward me. It was Mary, the cook, heading for her workshop in the Melrose kitchen, in anticipation of supper, although it was scarcely four o'clock.

We chatted for a moment about how one got this place or that, and following her directions, I turned off to the right between a vast field of cotton on one side and sorghum on the other, and so continued until I ran across several large sacks of picked cotton beside the lane. I nearly jumped a mile when a black dog, concealed in the high cotton plants beside the sacks, jumped out at me with a snarl. Two little picaneyes came screaming from somewhere deep in the cotton patches and quieted the animal. We chatted a few minutes together,--the little boy and the little girl. They seemed to know me, but I wasn't conscious of ever having seen either of them before.

They directed me further along my pathway until I came to some great pecaness, where I lost the trail completely, and so jumped over the fence into a pasture, and continued along the fence, hard by more cotton fields. After a quarter of a mile or so, I heard someone saying good evening to me,--and then a chorus of children's voices, seemingly glad to find some excuse to break the monotony of their afternoon's endeavor.

It was several members of Pat's baseball team, who having foresaken their efforts in the sports, had returned to the soil for the more lucrative employment of picking cotton.

I tried my hand at picking some cotton and was automatically fascinated by the imagined or real affinity which seemed to exist between the human hand and the snowy staple. Possibly there was an ever so slight film that seemed to cling to the ginners,--or possibly it was the slight moisture on the finger tips that seemed to attract the cotton to draw it a little closer to the flesh and an ordinary inanimate object would.

Naturally, I suppose, the idea crossed my mind that in reality there is some such affinity between the cotton and the hand that helps to give it the strong appeal that it seems to have, particularly for darkies, and probably for other people, and if this be true, it might account in part for the enthusiasm which cotton picking holds for old and young alike,--aside, I believe, from the purely monetary regards that the harvesting of the crop promises.

Half an hour later I realized that it would soon be getting supper time, and as I was completely lost in this vast sea of cotton fields and became groves, I realized it was time for me to locate a turn-row again. A couple of the boys showed me the way, over the pasture fence, and along a smoothly cropped grass plot where cows were grazing peacefully in the vicinity of a bayou. Once this had been a cotton field, the boys explained, but it had been turned into pasture land after someone had turned up great mounds of earth in search of buried gold. They weren't sure if gold was ever found, but we agreed that we hoped it had been as minor recompense for all the labor that must have been expended to cause such upheavals.



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Across the pasture, we traveled until we came to an old cotton-wood tree beneath which a gate opened i to a lane. I said good by to the little darkies, and headed up this little road, closely shut in on either side by great hedges of various wild vines and heterogenous bushes and trees. It must be a magnificent lane when the first frost has turned the green to scarlet and gold.

A little ways along the path I noticed a rider coming towards me, but as the sun was to his back, I couldn't recognize him until we came face to face. It was Frank, coming to get the cows down in the lower pasture. We chatted for a few moments, running over the breach of confidence which had broken out when Henry had showed such poor sense in airing on Sunday. We agreed, too, that forgetting his short-comings and an effort to resume a semblance of former friendship was the best treatment of the whole situation.

And thus we parted, Frank riding away toward the pasture, and my footsteps continuing up the little lane past a little shot-gun house whose little gallery was almost in the lane, and thence by Puny's house with his fancy picket fence, and so on to Sam Brown's where the lane turns into the River road, and so back to Melrose, for a quick shave and shower before supper.

After supper Aunt Cammie and I talked until nearly eight while Pat and his father, did not join us ~~xx~~ until nearly that hour, being pr-occupied by the work the men were doing on the front of the house where a side of the second story in the East Tower room had to be torn off after sun-down to extract two groups of bees which had made larges nests between the outer and inner walls.

I was in bed a little after eight, and remembered the radio's promise of local thunder showers, for away in the north an electric storm was flashing and cannonading madly, although it all seemed as remote from Louisiana as a Nazi air raid on London. And so to sleep.

606

Wednesday, August 28th, 1940.

I awoke about one o'clock, to find that the thunder and lightning had died out but the rains had come. I went back to sleep again.

A little before six when Frank arrived, it was still raining, and Frank thought I would do well to put off my walk for another day, the lane was so soupy.

It was a quite day at Melrose. The sun came out about 8 o'clock, and blazed all morning, as Aunt Cammie and I worked together at Summer arters. During dinner a storm blew up again and it poured, but the sun was out and a rainbow in the skies before we were done with coffee.

I went around to the front of the big house to see how much of the weather board had been taken off in last night's pursuit of the bees. A goodly section had been ripped away, and a hundred pound tin had been filled with the honey from one hive. There remains another hive to be removed tonight.

We worked all afternoon noon, both jointly and individually, and after supper made a little tour of the front garden, talking the while with Henry who was waiting there for Bill Anderson to come to assist in finishing the bee job. Henry told me that there was coal oil (kerosene) in two of the tin cans sitting by the foot of the ladder. He said that one drop of coal oil on a bee killed him immediately, and that if one threw coal oil on a snake, so that it touched his head, the snake would go into a fit and die immediately. I asked Aunt Cammie about this, but she said she didn't know. I gather she thought it was a little like putting salt on a bird's tail to catch him.

We sat for a while in Aunt Cammie's room after the seven o'clock news,--Aunt Cammie, Joe and I. Henry had already left as it was evident that Bill had forgotten about his rendezvous at the bee hive.

Aunt Cammie had just called sister and learned that Harry had left that household. I had always thought Harry and exceptional child, but I really hadn't anticipated this.

Pat, who had been at a picnic at the Hertzog camp during the afternoon, had seen Sister there, and he said Sister had accused Harry of stealing some clothes pins,--Heaven alone knows why the child should want them. Pat said that Harry had pleaded innocence, and that Sister, on the contrary maintained that he had stolen them--and possibly both he and Susie, who had left Sister a week back had also taken some. Harry still demurred, but Sister was adamant, and declared that she would make Harry pay for them. Harry had other ideas on that point, too, and so he had told her he didn't want to work there anymore. Joe observed that Sister would eventually learn that a good servant was worth more than a few clothes pins.. Eight o'clock, and so to bed, a clear, starlit night and possibly a walk in the morning.



Thursday, August 29th, 1940.

607

I slept well last night until mid-night, when I suddenly awakened, as the clock was striking. A terrific wind had apparently stormed in out of nowhere. All the ten foot draperies at the doors and windows on the north side of the house were standing out horizontally, the screen doors were swinging and banging, and like a flock of wild geese being blown about the skies, the pile of papers on my desk were sailing through the room and around the corner into the next, whence the gale was twisting.

I leaped out of bed, scantily clad in bed-room slippers, dashed out on the storm-swept front gallery and closed the batten blinds, and thence back into the house to shut all the doors of southern exposure, to cut off the draft.

Thence out onto the North gallery, to close all the windows and doors there, and to the two projecting rooms on either end of the gallery where some of Aunt Cammie's prize wool and collared cotton was stored in burlap bags. The stationary blinds on these room's openings were fastened outside the house, and in the dark and rain I tussled with them to unfasten them and then to force them against the gale which was pouring in oceans of water.

Within twenty minutes or half an hour the job was finished, and I had taken a quick bath to wash off the rain and smudges which I had accumulated while tussling with the rusted iron bolts and gages on the blinds.

Back in bed, I discovered that Grandpa, who had been sleeping at my feet, had just sat there and screamed, sensing that something was entirely out of hand, but totally uncertain as to what to do about it.

I smoked a cigarette, and pondered for a few moments as to what scenes might be taking place at other houses and cabins about "elrose.

At 5:30 Frank arrived. After his usually Good morning, he gighed, and asked me how I made out last night.

He said he had been asleep at mid-night when the unexpected gale struck the countryside. His wife had shaken him, and with her and May, his daughter helping, they had quickly secured all the windows in the cabin. When that was accomplished, Frank feeling his own house secured against the storm remarked: "Lord, I wonder how Mr. Francois is making out in that house alone with all them windows and doors?"

Still terrified by the wind and rain, his wife had no time for such considerations. She spoke excitedly and admonished him: "Don't pay no mind to Mr. Francois now. Just start sprinklin' that Holy water, an' start a-prayin'."

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Whereupon his wife and daughter both began beating the air with their Holy water, falling on their knees at the same time and saying their beads for all they were worth, while Frank, in amused astonishment, looked on.

"Within 20 minutes the wind had moderated and the "lady-folks had stopped their prayin'."

We all went back to bed again, but I kept laughin' as I thought of them jus' a sprinklin' that Holy water and a-floppin' around the floor there while the wind was a howlin' outside and nobody payin' no attention to nuthin'."

So that's what happened at Frank's house.

After getting out a flock of mail before 9:30, I made a little tour of the garden where I found Bud, Sam and Bill busy with their hoes,--as I approached,--and we went through their recations to last night's big wind. Some of them, of course, had been bothered by the breeze sailing through their respective cabins, as each of these follow the general custom of all darkies of sleeping with their windows and doors tightly bolted, regardless of the heat that may be existing, and to make the air a little more wholesome, they usually keep a kerosene lamp burning all night.

Aunt Cammie came over to Summer Quarters to dictate from the Diary to me a little before 10 o'clock. We spoke of J. H. ~~xxxx~~ who had returned from New Orleans last night, and who reported no fever this morning in spite of his rather long drive.

Just as we started to work, having written one line, the coffee arrived. We sent Joe, who had brought it, to ~~thax~~ go to the store to bring the mail, which he did, just as we started to read again. We ran through it, and then turned to read again when Sister's husband appeared.

He reported his version of Harry's departure. According to his story, Harry did not get up promptly yesterday morning when his alarm clock rang at 5:45, explaining shortly afterward that as it was raining, he thought arising a little later would be alright.

For sometime, Sister and the Dr. had thought of beating him, and had promised him as much. They accordingly sent Harry up stairs with this ritual in mind, the Dr. following shortly thereafter. On arriving up stairs, Harry spoke to the Dr., saying:

"Dr. Wenk, before you whip me, I want to say that I am quitting my place today."

The Dr. accordingly thought he would let the beating go, and thereupon sent Harry to his room over the garage to get his things. But when the Dr. reported the matter to Sister she seemed up-set, and they agreed that had they had promised Harry a beating, he really ought to have one, and that possibly after the beating he would decide to remain with them.



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It was decided therefore that the good Dr. should take a strap with him and go up to the boy's bed room and beat him, which he did.

But when the beating was finished, Harry decided he was going anyway, and so they gave him the pair of overalls and a shirt he was wearing, a dollar and a half, I believe, and let him go.

And that concluded that chapter of Harry's life up to the present year of Grace, 1940. I have always felt the child exceptionally smart, and so how I feel the world will hear from Harry again, although I haven't the vaguest notion how or when or why.

A little after eleven, we made another attempt at the Diary, and succeeded astonishingly to the extent of two pages, after which it was time to do other plantation supervision until dinner at noon.

A little after one, we resume our work, moving along famously for half an hour when Henry came in to say that he hadn't worked this morning because he had had some things he wanted to do at home. Aunt Cammie received this explanation as a matter of course, explaining after Henry had gone that it would be pretty difficult to keep a person of Henry's personality within the circumscribed limits of ordinary labor, and that as many another had pointed out in the past: "It is impossible to hurry or harry a genius".

Before leaving Henry spoke of an old white man who used to live with his wife down the lane near his home. The old man was inclined to go out at night, and his wife, --a woman inclined toward the bazaar, used to imagine that colored men came to their fence to make signals to her husband to come with them to a night of frolic. She said she had often seen them in the dark, --not actually the individual figures, since they were as black as the night itself, but she saw the cigarette that would be lighted or puffed into a glow to communicate with her husband. To counter-act this custom, the old woman begot herself a gun, and when ever she saw what she took to be a signal, she would blaze away at it. In reality, no one, black or white, ever came to give signs of the approach of an evening of revelry. What the old woman actually saw was merely an occasional glow-worm, flitting along the weeds near the top of the fence which surround the house, and it was at these poor innocent little lightening bugs that she would aim her boradside. Of course this exentricity on her part didn't matter so much until she fired it in the direction of the big road or in the direction of a cabin that stood to the right and the left of her house. These quarters, occupied by colored people, were naturally thrown into a panic, and eventually the people in them protest to J. H., to make this white "lady" stop shooting in their direction.

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Thursday, August 28 or 29th, 1940 - page 4.

Finally the old man must have had about all he could stand of his wife's peculiarities, for he finally fixed up a little house on wheels, and told her he was going up the road a-piece, to sell it to some one. This was a number of years ago, and I guess he must have been having difficulty in finding a customer, since he has never returned, and his wife, --less active in ballistics in later years, still live somewhere in a little cabin along Cane River.

Shortly afterward, we resumed our labors, but after half an hour, Henry returned, explaining that some furniture had come, and asking where it should be placed.

It turned out that it was a large upholstered sofa and chair which Aunt Cammie had had Robina buy for Winter Quarters for my comfort during my evening's spent in my house. The things were accordingly unpacked and placed in my house, and Aunt Cammie and I deserted our labors for a sitting on the new furniture. It was all that it was supposed to be and will be grand during the cold winter nights before my blazing hearth.

With the arrival of the furniture and its unpacking by Henry and Sam and Mat, the commotion on my front gallery was counterbalanced by the re-arrangement of sofas and what not inside the house where Frank and I were clearing decks for the placing of the new pieces.

It was rather tense when Henry and Mat brought the new piece in, for it probably was one of the few contacts at such close range between Henry and Frank before the scism. Henry didn't speak a syllable, and Frank responded in kind.

Later in the afternoon, while Henry was painting the liquor closet, carried from Lyle's library to the front gallery, I talked with him. He got going under difficulties, obviously still seething from the inner flare-up at his recent contact. But eventually I got him melted and before five o'clock he was rattling along at a great rate.

At that moment, Aunt Cammie dropped by to see how the work was progressing and to announce that a wire had just arrived from New Orleans saying that Lyle would arrive tonight at 10:30.

Supper, and afterward a little chat in Aunt Cammie's room and then farewells to Joe and Mat who are leaving in the morning, -- Joe taking Mat as far as Houston, where Mat will entrain for Raymondville down on the Mexican border where he will go to school this winter.

In a rain storm, Lyle arrived a little before eleven, and together we chatted until three. I feel asleep easily afterward, only to awaken as Granpa, whom I had left at Lyle's had deserted his former patron to come and spend the night with me.



611

Friday, August 30th, 1940.

Up at five, albeit sleepy, although a brisk shower and early breakfast brought things into better focus, so that by the time I was in the big road for a morning constitutional my sleepiness had fled.

Before reaching Cane River bridge, I found the road too sticky for measured tread, and I was accordingly glad to accept a lift from Bill who came along in his car before I had gone far.

Last night's shower precludes any thought of cotton-picking at Melrose during the morning, but I noticed before we had reached the bayou, perhaps 3 hundred yards beyond the bridge that there was no evidence of rain, and before we reached the land's termination at Montrose, we noticed people already starting towards the cotton patches where evidently not a drop of moisture had struck during the past 24 hours.

Saying goodbye to Bill, I continued my course hither and yon about the countryside, landing in Natchitoches before 8 o'clock, and bumping ~~it~~ into one of the Friedman's in a fine new car along the big road. I accepted an invitation to ride, and we headed South, stopping off for a moment at Natchez to pick up Miss Elizabeth Friedman, speak for a moment to former mulatto residents of Melrose, now living at Natchez, La., and so down the Bermuda road to Melrose where we three called on Celeste for a round of eye-openers before nine-thirty.

Mesdames Friedman were just returned from 17 days in California, and had much to say of the comfort of the stream-line train, running from San Francisco and Los Angeles which included a car fitted up with a bar straight down the center, around which gathered a continuous line of passengers during the trip.

Back home a little after ten, I dropped by Lyle's house where I found Aunt Cammie visiting with him as Lyle was having his morning repast. We chatted a few moments, and I declined a chair as I wanted to give them an opportunity to get caught up on conversation. Back to Winter quarters, I bathed and scrutinized the mail which I found on my new sofa. There was one piece in particular, a collection of photostats which meant much to me.

Dinner at 12, and Lyle visited me for an hour afterward when we ran through some books which had too long been left un-cracked. Lyle then retired for a nap, and I attacked my typewriter for two or three hours while Aunt Cammie received a number of pilgrims who had journeyed far to visit the gardens of Melrose,--places as distant, I believe as Ohio.

At four thirty, Frank appeared with an invitation from Lyle to join him for a h ghball before supper which I accepted, and thence to supper, with a nicety of balance between good food and conversation,--only Aunt Cammie, J. H., Lyle and I being present to make inroads on the grand fried chicken as we settled the state of the Nation.

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Friday, August 30th, 1940 - page 2.

I remember on line at the table,--I believe a discussion had been going on regarding reform efforts in Vieux Quartier or Carre,--when some one said, in illustrating some point:

"After all, if He had had any sense of humor, Christ would never have gone through with the Crucifixion."

Somehow the whole table, including the speaker, seemed startled by the sound of these words.

After supper, Lyle cut up some fine morsels of chicken on a bread and butter dish, and accompanied me to Winter quarters to offer them to Grandpa, who as usual, had been waiting for us in the bed of floor halfway between the big house and my maisonette.

With due ceremony, Lyle made the presentation to Grandpa, who took one sniff at the fine banquet, turned from Lyle and came over to me and rubbed and wove himself around my legs. We both found plenty of observations to make regarding Grandpa's appreciation of Lyle's efforts to recall the good old days to Grandpa when he was Lyle's protegee.

At dusk, Aunt Cammie, Lyle and I walked through the gardens, out into the big road, and along the river road, returning about dark, heavily fortified with an amazing bouquet of honeysuckle which Aunt Cammie had gathered along the river road.

We sat with Aunt Cammie until nearly nine, and then retired to Lyle's house, disposing of Windsor and going into a variety of contemporary questions of the day, as we sipped from our tall glasses. From Howard Hunter, close to the powers that be in Washington, Lyle had heard directly from doings in the Capital. It seems that Harry Hopkins was more or less forced to resign as Secretary of Commerce,--not because of ill health as reported in the press, but rather because he stirred up so much opposition to himself in carrying out the residential wishes at the Democratic Convention in Chicago by forcing the nomination of Wallace as Vice President. It seems that Harry has been living at the White House for some time, and it is thought he will continue to for some months at least.

It seems to be the consensus of opinion that Hopkins, as chief proponent of the white color class in his management of expenditures of W.P.A. funds is likely to be remembered long by those in the know as being largely the power which swung so much Federal support to such agencies as produced the Federal Writer's Projects., etc.

It was a little after one o'clock when I said goodnight, to be followed by Grandpa who had been waiting on Lyle's gallery for me.

Oh, yes, I nearly forgot to say that twice today I saw Janet Chrystie, and I must say that on second thought I found she possessed many qualities running all the way from Grecian sense of proportion to Hapsburg contour.



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Saturday, August 31st, 1940 -

Another beautiful day, with a cool clear dawn which ordinarily would beckon me to the open road. I was sleepy, however, and so lingered on in bed with my second cup of coffee until just before Frank arrived with my breakfast.

I thought once of taking a nap afterwards, but changed my mind after a cold shower had picked me up, and I had set my hand to correspondence.

Aunt Cammie came over a little before nine, and together we worked on Mr. Wailes until after eleven, when I had another shower before dinner.

After dinner, and a prolonged demi-tasse, we all went our several ways, with Aunt Cammie attending to household supervision, Lyle to his house for a nap, and a little radio playing on my part.

A little after three, Frank appeared, saying that Lyle had asked if I wouldn't come over for drinks with him. I accepted, and together we chatted between the departure and arrival of more than one visitor who came to see Lyle and regale us with plantation gossip which only they of the colored section can grapevine with such speed and sketchiness. For me, Lyle has always personified the Planter,--inordinately tall, substantial in bearing, and sufficiently heavy to give added weight to the dignity of his carriage. I must say the darkies all seem to take to him like duck to water, with that certain "camaraderie" of sympathy which I have noted in but few people without a certain feeling of respect on the darker side of the line.

Robina arrived from Shreveport a little after four, and at supper things went along briskly, with conversation skipping along like a flattened stone skimming the margin of a lake.

After supper, we had all hoped to go riding, but Aunt Cammie declined, and so Robina drove Lyle and me along the River road, past the church, Clarence Compton's, and so down to the dam, and thence back home along the other side of the river.

We chatted for an hour or so,--all four of us in Aunt Cammie's room, after which Lyle and I gathered up some ice from the refrigerator and came over to his house. BTF.

We covered lots of fabulous facts and fancies and even persons, too, until mid-night, when I declined Lyle's invitation to linger on, for I was sleepy and there were a few little things to do before sleep, which I eventually arrived at with Grandpa at my feet.

Sunday, September 1st, 1940.

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The weather continues perfect.

Frank said that Robina was still asleep when he served the Madam coffee on the sleeping porch, but when he returned about seven o'clock with my breakfast, he said Miss Robina was awake and had sent me a message that she would be over to call on me shortly.

She arrived between eight and nine, and together we began getting caught up on conversation, reading, etc. Aunt Cammie ran over for a few minutes to have coffee with us at ten o'clock, and from then until dinner time Robina and I continued our tete-a-tete.

Dinner was rather dominant in Henry's, although Lyle, Robina and I were accustomed to the board.

After dinner Lyle and Robina came over to my house for a couple of hours, and after lemonade, Robina returned to the big house to survey the possibility of ice cream appetites, and finding it good, we drove down to Montrose and back for a festival on our return, with all members participating.

Shortly afterwards I left to take off my long beard. Later I learned that Sister, having explained that her husband had decided to take up weaving, asked her mother to inquire of Robina before Sister left for home, if Robina would relinquish the loom she had in Shreveport for the Dr.'s benefit.

I think Robina and Lyle,--and possibly the Dr. himself,--was a little surprised at his unexpected interest in handcraft.

One thing led to another, and when Robina came over a few minutes to join Lyle and me at his house for a drink, she seemed rather unstrung.

We had all planned to take a ride together, but under the circumstances, Lyle remained with Aunt Cammie while I accompanied Robina on a little drive, over to Zeline's and thence down the River road covering the same lovely drive we had taken the night before. We returned about eight o'clock, and found Lyle and Aunt Cammie waiting for us in the summer dining room, where we all feasted on cold chicken, and home made sandwiches, and all the good things that go in to make up a Sunday night supper when the servants are all gone.

We chatted in Aunt Cammie's room until after ten, and then saying goodnight to the ladies, Lyle and I retired to his house for a few night caps, varied subjects of conversation and entertainment, and so a little after one, too, said good night, and so to bed.



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Monday, September 2nd, 1940.

Another perfect day.

As I drank my morning coffee, my mind ran back a couple of years, when in 1938 on this date, Christian and I, ~~in~~ at about this same hour, picked up Mrs. Moore in Natchez, Miss., and made our first visit to Melrose.

This morning I felt about as tired as I did that morning, for two years ago, we had driven up from New Orleans where we had been Lyle's guests, and had had a flat tire in the traces before reaching Natchez,--the difficulty detaining us until nearly midnight, so that we reached Natchez just after the party which Mrs. Ferriday Byrnes had given in our honor had ended, and, bespattered with mud from head to foot, we had stolen into a restaurant for a belated dinner, when to our surprise most of the guests at the Byrnes' party arrived for a late cup of coffee in the same restaurant, so that conversation ran on until all hours of the night, and arising next morning was entirely out of line with our activities of the three preceding night.

Two years ago, we had found lots of guests and family at Melrose, but this year there were only Robina and Lyle and I to round out a reduced family gathering. This year there would be less people to fall over, and perhaps Aunt Cammie, Lyle and I would see more of each other.

A little after nine, Robina came over to call on me, and a little before 10 Aunt Cammie came to have coffee with us. After chatting a little longer, we thought of taking a little tour of the gardens to look over the butterfly lilies and the lotus flowers which might be growing in the river, but the sound of the dinner bell interrupted our explorations, and we were glad to join hands about the board.

With dinner was done, and only Aunt Cammie, Robina and Lyle and I were left, we decided that a little ride in the country was really in order. We accordingly drove up the river road, and so turning to the right toward Montgomery, we headed toward the back country.

It's a remote country out this way, where "little River meanders ~~slowly~~ sluggishly along tree tangled banks and Spanish moss and luxuriant vines weave a meshwork of tenuous greenery which conceals even the stream itself for miles and miles.

Out here, in ante-bellum days, great plantations spread for miles back from either bank of Red River and great houses arose and disappeared with the rise and fall of the Era of the Steamboats. Today J. H. owns many a broad acre in this locality, and on one of his places we stopped for a moment to chat with Masseline, one the wife of Lyle and Aunt Cammie's cook. Masseline is a buxom negress of some 30 years. She has tossed off a brood of eleven children, and still appears capable of a dozen more if mistakes in timing should occur.

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Masseline grinned broadly when she recognized Aunt Cammie and Lyle. A born coquette, Masseline automatically began manipulating her optics to appear at her most seductive manner, and her continued grin revealed to striking advantage the gold tooth which Robina explained to me in an aside, that Aunt Cammie had provided for her to satisfy a whim when she used to cook at Melrose.

Masseline thought there was going to be a mighty short crop of cotton this year, and she laughed as she said she didn't know how they would get through the Winter. Aunt Cammie hinted that there might be need for someone additional in the culinary department at Melrose, and Masseline seemed enchanted at the possibility, but neither she nor the Madam galvanized a promise either of acceptance or providing the possibility for one.

Masseline went into gales of laughter when Lyle recalled the time he gave her some money to celebrate, and was distressed when an hour or so later, he discovered that she had been so hard up she had used the money for food. This investment called for another round of money so that Masseline might provide herself with the liquor she had denied herself for food. That evening her little boy, Jake, had been sitting on the steps of their little cabin when he saw Masseline coming up the road. It seemed to little Jake that Masseline's feet weren't tracking quite straight but she assured him they were. About that time, Masseline recalled that the chicken coop hadn't been fastened for the night, and she accordingly started to climb the fence to protect the chickens from night prowlers. Her condition however made fence climbing a difficult hurdle, and more than Masseline could negotiate. She somehow slipped and fell to the ground, catching her leg in some manner in the fence so she couldn't get back to her feet. At the same time, some grown person came along the road and little Jake called to them to say that his Mama was drunk and couldn't get up. The combined effort of the child and grown up got Masseline back on her feet again. At this time, either her daughter or her sister was in bed in the house with a new-born babe. Masseline, gay at having been rescued, went in the cabin in with another woman who was also slightly over-seas. They considered the mother and the tiny baby, and somehow hit upon the idea of playing bean-bag with the little picaninny. Masseline in one corner and the girl-friend in the other, they tossed the little baby back and forth between them with amazing non-chalance, giggling the while to the protestations of the recumbent mother, who before long, despairing the fate of her child, leaped out of bed and caught the human bean-bag, and so fled from the good natured frolic which was jeopardizing its life.

A few minutes more of such reminiscencing, and we said goodbye to Masseline, and so headed toward the Ferry which would take us to the East bank of Red River. There are no buildings along the West bank, and only a few remote farm houses on the East bank far away from the Ferry landing. As the boat was on the opposite shore, we blew for the lone ferryman who promptly



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headed the float out stream, puffing along beside it in a diminutive little launch. So far as we could see up and down the River, this was the only boat in sight, for I suppose there are no more boats on this famous old stream up which settlers had come early in the 1800's to ~~see~~ found the town of Natchitoches before New Orleans itself was founded. Over this samewater-way the great trade steamers bearing supplies and slaves up stream and cotton bales without end down stream, while later during the Confederate war, gun-boats had negotiated this great highway and helped to determine the subjugation of this region. Now the only vessel afloat, so far as we could see was this inadequate little puffing motor boat.

Once on the other side, we drove through Montgomery and so southward through Colfax, where the bloody riots of the 1870's had occurred and where scores of negroes had been subdued by cannon,--one of which is now in the front garden of Melrose.

Continuing south from Colfax along the fine cement highway we were forced to detour for a ways where Red River has started nibbling into its banks and is now engulfing a part of the Huey P. Long highway at this point.

A little further along we came to the famous old Bynum or Bynum plantation. This section of road has been famous for years as it passes through Bynum woods, famous for years as the most beautiful in this section of the country. Great oaks, cotton-woods and sycamores had towered to heaven while scattered in lesser heights through this forest were huge holly and dogwood, rare and luxuriantly blooming wisteria and all the flora which makes the Louisiana countryside so rich.

With the passing of the years and the disappearance of many another famous forest in Louisiana, the Bynum Woods gradually took on a deeper and more precious place in the hearts of all who passed through its depths on the highway which bisected it. With the changes in economics and ownerships, an ~~owner~~ a later day owner of this property who appreciated its unique sylvan beauty, envisioned the Woods as a permanent beauty spot for all who traveled through this section of Louisiana, and so, with a view of saving it from thoughtless destruction from others who might thoughtlessly rob the State of this beauty spot, he turned the forest over to a Church, feeling that such an institution would maintain the sanctuary in perpetuity. But the donor set too high a store on the Church's appreciation of this rare spot, as events proved shortly after it came into possession, for they sold off this property to the highest bidder,--with a view of having the grand old forest slashed into nothingness. Aunt Cammie, as we entered the stretch of road, cutting through this beautiful section, declared she was sorry she had come, for already the owners had slaughtered Bynum Woods,--the great trees all having been felled and carted ~~to~~ to the saw mill, and the smaller dogwoods and hollies about to be yanked out and out up or burned over into oblivion. It took God a long time to create the beauty of Bynum Woods but through the evil offices of the church, it didn't take many long to hack it into nothing.

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Monday, September 2nd, 1940 - page 4.

A little depressed about the whole thing, we turned back North, hoping to eradicate the fate of Bynum Woods and remember but its former glory,--and so back through Colfax and Montgomery, continuing on the East side of Red River up as far as Clarence, and so back through Natchitoches, and down the cement highway to Montrose, and up along the lane toward Melrose.

As we crossed the Cane River bridge, Robina slowed down and stopped beside two youths who were doing water color sketches of Cane River and the Catholic Church, newly painted, whose steeple, soaring above the rees, reflected itself in the mirror like surface of the River.

The youths turned to speak to us, saying they were trying out some new medium for landscape sketching, and were delighted to experiment on such a scene. They said that the Church in the reflection of the River was Lyle Saxon's Church.

To this Lyle responded to the youth's surprise: "Well, I am Lyle Saxon, and I must say that the church doesn't belong to me, but I do have an oil painting of the church as painted in 1835 in my cabin, and if you would care to drop by and see it, I should be glad to have you."

The youths were not slow in accepting the invitation, and shortly after we had returned to Melrose,--a little after six, the youths,-- a Mr. Kimbell and Orville Hanchey, arrived. Lyle offered drinks all around, and after ~~the~~ he had showed the boys the paintings, invited them, in Aunt Cammie's name to have dinner or rather supper with us. They accepted.

Supper done a little after dark, the youths departed, as did Lyle and Robina, the latter to run over to call on Zeline. A half hour later, they joined Aunt Cammie and me in the big house,--their stay having been pared down by the constant flash of lightning which promised a heavy storm shortly.

We chatted for half an hour, but Robina wasn't feeling quite well, and so Lyle went over to his house, made her a good drink, and shortly afterward he and I retired to his house.

We chatted for an hour or so speaking at length of the attoyers, Janet C., etc.

A little after one we said goodnight. The high winds which had been banging the gates and rushing through the heavens with a vast reight of storm clouds had all disappeared, and a perfectly calm star-spangled sky arched overhead. I was asleep five minutes later.



619

Tuesday, September 3rd, 1940.

Frank arrived at 5:30. I was rather surprised at the hour, as I had expected he would be stirring things earlier, as Lyle's train for New Orleans was scheduled to leave about 6:05 or 6:10.

I accordingly swallowed my coffee at a gulp, plunged through a shower, tore off my long beard, and was ready to go to the train with Lyle when I heard him on my gallery at a quarter of six. I think he must have done some slight of hand tricks, too, for his getting under way is usually more leisurely.

Davis, or Clyde or whatever his name was waiting for us at the side gate in the shiny Lincoln. We waved to the assembled group on the store gallery,--J. H., the overseer, and a flock of darkies of all ages. And so down along the river road in the early morning cool air, with the silver glass like surface of the river seemingly still asleep as seemed the cabins along its banks,--save where curling smoke from an occasional chimney bespoke the beginning of another day.

At Derry we waited for twenty minutes for the train which, they say, is almost always late, and then, with its arrival, we said goodbye, and Lyle was on his way back to New Orleans, and Davis or Claude or whatever, and I were headed back up the still slumbering river road. As we passed the Hertzog plantation, we saw Tony riding horseback, with two other horses in tow. He waved to us as we flew by. Further up the road, Henry flagged us, and we picked him up and so all arrived at Melrose before seven.

Frank brought me my breakfast immediately and as soon as I had devoured it,--while listening to the news, I went over to the big house where I found Robina with Aunt Cammie, just saying goodbye. I rode as far as Grand Ecote with Robina,--some 20 or 25 miles from Melrose, and then after saying goodbye to her, returned on foot to Natchitoches. After reaching the city limits, I was greeted in a friendly Good morning by a voice which was familiar although rather new. It was Orville Hanchey who had dined with us last night.

A little further along the street, J. H. called to me. He said he was returning to Melrose within 20 minutes and would like to ride. I would. And an hour and a half later we started.

Back home a little before ten o'clock, I had coffee with Aunt Cammie, who told me that the Saucier's from Texas had already paid their respects and gone on their way. It seems they had called yesterday afternoon while we were out, and had telephoned last evening to say they were coming.

Aunt Cammie and I worked on old Mr. Wailes in the morning, and in the afternoon. We chatted in the evening, since the family was more frequently with us today than usual. And so

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Wednesday, September 4th, 1940.

Lyle's birthday, and I am thinking about the same day two years ago, when early in the morning, Frank arrived with a huge silver vase, piled high with a magnificent bouquet, to which a note was attached from Aunt Cammie reading: "Happy Birthday to Lyle, but for Heaven's sake get this tureen back to the big house before dinner time since it is the only one large enough to serve today's dinner."

But Lyle had left for New Orleans yesterday, and so I contented myself with getting off a note to him regretting that time couldn't turn back in its flight for another birthday of two years back.

Aunt Cammie came over a little after eight, and together we worked on the diary until coffee time, when the arrival of the mail, came visitors, too,--the Palmers of California. The man is some kind of Aunt Cammie's cousin, Josephine Grunwald and formerly operated some sort of an antique shop on Royal Street in New Orleans. Long since he has been living in California.

This country was new to his wife, and after coffee, we made a round of the several houses. Aunt Cammie was called away to greet other arrivals, and it was with difficulty that she found us and we found her in the gardens when it was time, an hour or so later for the Palmers to leave.

After they had gone, I found that Mrs. Weiss from Natchitoches, had arrived to work with Aunt Cammie on slip covers for the new furniture in my house.

At dinner, it was interesting to hear the news of things political, as Mrs. Weiss saw them at the Normal. She repeated a story about the school which Mr. Hanchey had told us last night, illustrating one reason why Huey Long's sister, was so unpopular in her role as Art Instructor, and general dragon in the School. It seems that a year or two ago, Mrs. Cooper had been ill, and during her absence from her classes, had selected one of the ablest young women of her Art Class to substitute for her in teaching during Mrs. Cooper's absence. Time came for examinations, and the young woman, still in charge, gave the examination, graded the papers and turned in her reports accordingly. As temporary head of the class in which she herself was registered as a member, however, the young woman did not give herself a grade, feeling it was only fair that some other person should make such a grading. Mrs. Cooper returned to school just before graduation time, and the matter of grading the young woman who had taught during her absence came up. Mrs. Cooper refused to give the young woman a grade. What's more, Mrs. Cooper had the whole school under her thumb, thanks to the fear everyone had of her through the omnipotence of her brother Huey. In consequence the young

woman, lacking a final grade in this course, was refused a diploma, and in consequence, never was permitted to graduate.



621

Wednesday, September 4th, 1940. - page 2.

Nice people, these Longs.

After dinner, Aunt Cammie and I resumed our labors for a little while, after which she returned to Mrs. Weiss, and for a time sat in my house while Sister and her husband and child paid Aunt Cammie a visit.

A little later, Aunt Cammie suggested that both she and Mrs. Weiss take a nap, which they may or may not have done, for I returned to my typewriter at Lyles to hammer out some things.

Before Mrs. Weiss had left, however, I heard Beth Williams Clouthier's voice, and later I made a little tour of the gardens with her, her sister and Aunt Cammie.

Supper time followed immediately upon their departure, and afterwards Aunt Cammie and I picked up our Mississippi Slavery reading which we had laid aside ever so far back. And so until eight, we were picking up stray strands.

Back to Lyle's to bed, and contemplations of many things, including the popularity of horse operas, as revealed by Windsor, because of extenuating circumstances, why it never rains but it pours,--and so eventually to bed.

622

Thursday, September 5th, 1940.

I was tired this morning, but a couple of good stiff cups of Louisiana brought things around nicely.

I had a stack of mail to get out, and I accordingly cut breakfast short to accomplish this end.

Aunt Cammie came over early and shortly afterward the mail arrived. It was a good mail, much of which I should like to record, but probably would do better not to. There were peices from Manhattan and from Shreveport, and from Texas, and Kentucky and from Porto Rico. There were photostats, too, of The American Colonization Society pamphlet for 1829 which touched me. There was a note from Miss Post, of the Department of Agriculture, saying that she hoped to get back to Melrose late in October for a round of photographing with Aunt Cammie and me in the Natchez region, and I heard from Christian that he is still on the job,--a fact which settles much in my mind, since with the collapse of France, I have wondered what would happen to the consular and Diplomatic personnel. He said his father and mother were facing a winter of starvation in France, that Jean is wringing his hands, and that Chafollet, the old family chateau outside of Paris, had been sacked. Thus War erases another monument of 1700th Century art and architecture and removes the setting of another childhood forever.

Dinner and at its conclusion, Mary, the cook, asked Aunt Cammie if she might have Sunday off, as it was the second one of the month and therefore important for her church activities. Aunt Cammie said she certainly could have it, and that she should take Saturday afternoon, too, and that she would accordingly arrange for another cook to come for the week-end.

In the afternoon we continued our transcribing and later Aunt Cammie worked on the slip covers in my house while I continued pounding away at the typewriter in Lyle's for a couple of hours.

Supper at 5:30 and afterward an hour of reading from a recent issue of Life, detailing The Fall of France, which was illuminating and yet still without adequate explanation of just how the collapse occurred. I am wondering if the whole debacle is so complex that it may be difficult to find just what really did happen and how it happened.

We said goodnight at 8:30 and I retired immediately at Lyle's, only to awaken an hour later and notice a light gleaming through the trees over in the direction of the big house, indicating that Aunt Cammie was still working or reading. It was a warm night, and for a cloudless one, as damp as I have known. BTF



623

Friday, September 6th, 1940.

It was four o'clock when I awoke this morning, and still dark. I decided that I should like to have a cigarette, but found no matches in the house. Thereupon I was determined I must have a bath, knowing full well that a matchbox would be necessary if I were to light the stove which heats the water in the tank. I don't know just why it had to be a hot bath,--possibly the dampness of the night, and the determination to have a hot bath on general principles.

I accordingly dressed, and stepped out into the night. Dawn gave no hint of a new day in the East. The sky was a gorgeous panoply of glittering stars. Through Lyle's gate, across the formal plot in front of the African house and so over to my house where I found matches, and so back to Lyles for a hot bath. I had one.

It was easy enough to get out a lot of mail this morning before 5:30 when I leaped back into bed again just before Frank arrived with coffee,--and after he had gone, back I leaped to my machine.

Aunt Gammie came over before nine and we worked together until coffee and the mail arrived. There was, among other letters, one from Denton, saying the boys hadn't yet relinquished the idea of purchasing the mills at Berthadale, Miss., and in response to a telegram from there, they had decided to run over there on Saturday, spending Sunday in Mississippi, and head back for Texas on Monday, stopping off at Melrose on Monday afternoon. It sounds like a large programme for Kenneth,--a trip well over a thousand miles under pressure of time, since his leg is in such a precarious condition that he must remain in a reclining position all the time when not actually at school.

But there was a letter from Robina, more disturbing, for it bespoke of an accident, sufficiently serious in itself but even more disturbing in its implications as to the cause. While preparing herself a cup of coffee Wednesday morning, she felt a fainting sensation, and accordingly switched off the gas just as she toppled over on to the stove. She was severely burned, and probably revived because of the intense pain. I am wondering if she will take care of herself and eradicate the seat of this evil which is rather alarming, in view of what has gone on before.

As Frank left my house this afternoon, after serving lemonade, I notice that Henry, who was just passing, spoke to him,--rather frigidly, I must say, but nevertheless spoke. It must be he is coming out of his fit after all these days. I was glad to see that Frank responded in a manner that gave the impression he was always in the habit of passing the time of day with him.

Supper at six, and reading until eight. And so to Lyle's house. I sat for awhile, brooding over the embarrassment of riches, etc., etc. I was asleep by ten.

624

Saturday, September 7th, 1940.

Up and doing by six o'clock, with a hasty turn of the gardens before breakfast, which seems to arrive later and later each day. I shall be enchanted when Mary gets a new horse or Melrose gets an early bird cook.

I took to the big road later than I wanted to., and accordingly found the Montrose lane rather more warmish than it would have been earlier.

The fields bordering the lane were white with cotton,--every boll on every bush or plant broken wide open. In view of the slowness the crops are opening this year, I was struck by this advance in the crop in this section, but when I stepped three feet into the patch, I discovered that it was only the plants bordering the field where the full sunlight strikes that is open. The rest is buried in a deep shadow of foliage brought on, I suppose, by all those July days of rain.

I saw no one on the roads this morning,--everyone must be sitting by the cotton patches, waiting for the bolls to open. Even the buses as he seemed to have already flown to whiter patches.

And so with the mounting sun, I turned my steps toward home, covering only about 6 miles this morning, which was enough, I discovered by the time I reached home.

I found Aunt Gammie working in my house on the slip covers, and so I urged her to relax for a few moments while I leaped through a shower, and afterwards we went over to Lyle's house to continue our work on the Wailes business.

After dinner we resumed our labors, and accomplished considerable, in spite of the heat which wasn't especially conducive to exertion of any kind.

In the afternoon a bunch of Pilgrims came to call on Aunt Gammie, one Madame Compton, and I don't know who all, while I staid cloistered at Lyle's.

During supper, one Hawthorne youth,--who hadn't been at Melrose since he was 8, and now 17 years had elapsed, broke in on desert. He didn't stay long. I never did know the name of his companion, but it didn't matter.

We read after supper until eight, discussed contemporary American porcelaines, the current manifestations of civilization as reflected by the bombings of European cities, and so to bed before 8:30. I was in bed at Lyle before nine, too.

BTF



625

Sunday, Sept. 8th, 1940.

Cloudless day and warm, and inclined toward the solitary,--all of which I liked.

At six o'clock when I crossed back from Lyle's house to mine, it was deliciously cool and the heavy dew made everything seem new washed and clean. I was surprised to see Clemence, who had undertaken Mary's job of cooking for the week-end, disappearing in the african house at such a strange hour. I reckon she was lifting some old volumes from early plantation libraries which are stored there. Clemence has many accomplishments for a cook,--she paints, she sews, she cooks, she can do almost anything she sets her hand to, and too frequently, it is said, she sets her hands to things that belong to others,--and those things usually stick.

Before breakfast, I had rounded up a flock of butterfly lilies and a couple of neat bouquets of dahlias,--although gathering the latter present something of a problem if an ladder isn't conveniently near, since they now must stand some 10 or 12 feet high. As for the perfume of the butterfly lilies, I reckon there is nothing this side of Paradise,--not even Araby,--which compares with this heavenly fragrance I don't know why one finds them so infrequently in gardens either in this country or abroad.

Aunt Cammie came over between eight and nine and together we labored on Mr. Wiles. A little before ten o'clock the family began arriving for hither and yon, and as a result, our joint labors for the day were suspended.

For the balance of the day, I worked alone, until five, when with the crowd dispersed, I joined Aunt Cammie for a round of the garden, and hence upstairs for reading,--both of us foregoing the cold chicken and other likely morsels in the ice box for supper.

A little before eight we said good night. I gathered up grandpa and little grandpa who were waiting for me, and so over to Lyle's house. The moon was so bright, I didn't bother turning on the lights to undress, and before the clock struck I was in bed. Outside, the gardens were vocal with a thousand singing insects, and plantation sounds from far and near. One feels so much more akin to living things in this remote rural setting than one does in an election jam at Times Square, and somehow when one realizes that the human quality is even closer than is apparent to the casual glance, one realizes that cohesive qualities like marriages, are in reality blessed by Heaven if not always made there.

626

Monday, September 9th, 1940.

An exceptionally cool and dew-washed dawn.

With Mary arriving after seven, Frank prepared and brought me my breakfast about 6:30, so I might get an early start in the big road.

I headed down the Montrose Lane, but had gone not more than half way when Leon Attoyer came along in a cotton hauling truck and stopped for me. I rode as far as Montrose with him. There I saw several mulatto youths, dressed in their Sunday clothes,--a sight which was arresting on such a pleasant day when the cotton bolls were aching to be plucked.

The only two I recognized were Regis' boy, a youth of some 16 or 17 summers, and Edward, who lives with Zeline and Joe who is about 20. They told me that they and the other youths were trying to catch a ride toatchitoches in order to sign up for Conservation Corps,--CCC. I was rather puzzled at this sudden enthusiasm for the CCC, but later I learned the moving element in this rush for a place on the rolls.

It seems that some youth along Cane River had joined the Civilian Conservation Corps a couple of years ago, and during his two years of service he had never drawn the twenty dollar a month pay which is made in either monthly payments or, if desired, is paid in a lump sum at the end of the service. This youth had chosen the latter course, and in consequence, after returning home two years later, had received a check for some \$480.00.

He had cashed this check last Friday or Saturday, and suddenly being possessed of more money than he had probably ever seen in his life, he proceeded to get rid of it as quickly as possible. In a couple of days his efforts met with considerable success as he scattered bills with abandon at the local saloon on drinks for all comers. Such a display had had a telling effect upon many of the youthful hangers-on Saturday night, and by Sunday many of them came to the conclusion that the thing to do was to drop their agriculture pursuits, even though it be at the height of the cotton season, when they have an opportunity to make the one cash income of the year, and take to conserving the Nation. I am wondering what poor Zeline and Joe think of all this, and what the youths will be thinking before their two year's service is completed.

On the edge of town, a youth came along in a ford of indistinct vintage, but surely ancient enough to merit consideration if one were to risk his neck in it. The youth is a pick-up man for a cleaning establishment. He stopped to offer me a ride, saying that he was going down Montrose way. I didn't know him, but he seemed to know me. A couple of youthful darkies were waiting for a ride near by, and he also loaded them in, along side an old man who told me he had used to work in Aunt Cammie's flowers years ago.



627

September 9th, 1940, - page 2.

The car groaned a little as we started up, but inspite of a occasional spells of wheezing, it made pretty good time until we turned off the cement highway at Natchez, La., and headed toward Bermuda. After crossing the bridge there, the car began feeling its years. It snorted a couple of times, seemed to develop chronic asthma, and then eventually just faded out. By this time it was after ten o'clock and the sun was high and hot. The youth dickered with the engine, patted some of the gageets on the dashboard, rattled its insides a little and then got us all back in the car and stepped on the starter. The car never batted an eye lash. Eventually we decided that pushing the poor all thing toward a garage down the road a mile and a half was the next method of procedure. Accordingly we pushed. It's a good way to get rid of excess in a boiling hot Louisiana sun.

Arriving at the garage, operated by a negro in his made over barn, we relaxed, and while the darkie was coming to look over his vicim, I admired a cage of white fan-tailed pige ones which he kept in back of the garage whose windows looked out on Cane River. They were beautiful birds.

But when the darkie saw his customer and considered what he claimed was his ix unappreciated labor on the same car sometime back, he said he couldn't do anything on the car unless the boy who was driving it would guarantee payment by the car's owner. The boy couldn't do that. And so, for what reason, I was a little uncertain, we all clambered back in the car, and to everyone's astonishment the old thing actually started when the driver stepped on the starter. And so we whizzed along down the river road, and all separated in various directions on reaching Melrose. I hope the car didn't do as much before the youth got it back to town.

Back home, I found Aunt Cammie in my house working on slip covers. We ~~xxxx~~ ran through the mail, which included a letter from Robina and a note from Mary Lambdin from the Memphis Hospital, saying that she was coming over to Melrose this week., which made that part of the mail successful for us.

After dinner, I retired to Lyle's house to work at my typewriter, while Aunt Cammie undertook a siesta. About 1:30 however, she called on me to say that she had just had a telephone that Kenneth and Rudolph would be here with half an hour. We accordingly went over to my house, where Aunt Cammie continued with the slip covers, while I slipped into a shower. Before I was out, Kenneth and Rudolph and Kenneth's mother and his brother arrived.

I joined them shortly, and was glad to see the boys looking so well. Kenneth's mother reminded me much of Mrs. Keeler a woman of considerable charm whom I used to know at 1 Christopher Street in New York.

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September 9th, 1940 - page 3.

On Saturday the Hunts had driven in their new Buick,-- or possibly Rudolph's new Buick from Denton Texas to Magnolia, Mississippi. They had spent Sunday in going over the Berthadale mill which we had visited last Easter together. They had purchased four of these power looms,--dobbies and jacquards. This morning they had left Magnolia, driven over to Natchez, and thence to Melrose.

I thought Kenneth had never seemed so well, and as he walked with ease and without crutches. I thought Rudolph looked well, too, but somehow he seemed far away somehow.

We chatted in twos and threes until supper time, after which we went for a further chat in Aunt Cammie's room. Aunt Cammie had suggested that in view of Kenneth's condition, he might enjoy sleeping in my house, which would be all his, and that Rudolph and I might sleep at Lyle's., and she accordingly, in her remarkable wisdom, sent us on our way about 7:20 so that we might have a chance to talk by ourselves before bed time.

We found the night so beautiful, that we walked down as far as the Bridge, and thence across the Bill's place, and hence back home. We chatted for a while,--I'm afraid I did most of the talking,-- and Kenneth spoke of the power looms he had purchased, and how they were going to set them up in the new dirt house he and Rudolph are building, and how the power in Denton wouldn't work them machines,--the power being too weak, but that some sort of a motor or engine could be contrived to make the businesses go. He said he had contracted with a man in New York to handle all their out-put of special designs. What their production capacity may be and what they intend to create for the trade I know not.

At eleven, or thereabouts, when I suggested that Kenneth might like to sleep in my house, he appeared to think I had stirred up something with Aunt Cammie to log-roll him out of Lyle's, but I explained it made not the slightest difference to either Aunt Cammie or me where he slept, and that we had merely been interested in having him sleep where ever he might be the most comfortable. He decided that such a place would be at Lyle's, and accordingly said goodnight to the boys and retired to my house.



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Tuesday, September 10th, 1940.

So far as heat goes, August continues to project itself into September, and the sky remains as steadfastly blue as ever.

Aunt Cammie and I worked together during the morning, with only a few interruptions, including one from an old man,-- Joe somebody, who has long worked in and about Melrose. He came to ask if he could have \$.25 cents to buy himself ten cents worth of coffee at the store, ten cents worth of sugar and five cents for some vaseline.

The Aunt Cammie responded by telling him that if he didn't have to worry about food so long as she still had a crust of bread, and that he should let her know when he needed anything. Taking pencil in hand, she accordingly scribbled out an order on a scrap of paper, and poud of this and a pound of that,--and cash thrown in for good measure. The old man seemed pleased, and thanked her in a cracked and faltering voice. Aunt Cammie responded by saying no thanks was due her, as it cost her nothing, and the old man departed toward the plantation store.

Sister is still without a servant, and accordingly birngs her husband and child up to Melrose for dinner each day. Mrs. Weiss was here, too, and conversation about the board Revolved about politics. Today is primary day in Louisiana and there was much discussion about the number of voters who can neither read nor write. They are shown by Commission-ers where to check the various names. Aunt Cammie rode down to Montrose with J. H. in the afternoon where Dan is one of the election board. They helped Aunt Cammie select the names which were to receive the Melrose votes. Aunt Cammie said she didn't know most of them. I never fail to wonder at the success democracy has and particularly in regard to the selection of local candidates in any section of the country where the average voter can scarcely hope to have any preference for any of the several candidates since for the most part they are merely names that few if any have ever heard before.

I heard one thing and witnessed another having to do with the old duffer, formerly resident of Duquesne University of Pittsburg, and at present high priest of the Melrose Church. It seems that last week he heard that some of his parishoners had criticised him for appearing in public,--that is about the fields owned by the Church without shirt or under-shirt. He must have been furious that anyone had the courage to question anyone whose person was so sacrosanct as his. Accordingly, he staged a rebuke at last Sunday's high mass, fx brining down his wrath on any who dared to remark about anything he did, and while speaking, he removed his vestments of office and piled them up on the pulpit just to show the startled flock of mulatoes that he could and would do as he pleased about wearing as much or as little either in church or out. From what I hear, he scared the daylights out of no one and lost an additional measure of respect for himself and his office.

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Tuesday, September 10th, 1940,-- page 2.

About three o'clock, I took a turn in the road for a bit of exercise. It was quite hot, and I accordingly stopped in the shade of a pecane tree well within the cotton patch which borders the River. As I stood there, two mulato women and a child came along the road.--They are parishoners of the Melrose Catholic Church. Further down the road a car was coming from the same direction as they. Already at the side of the dusty road, they hedged out into the grass a little further,--not only to be out of the highway, I suppose, but also to be a little further out of the center of the cloud of dust which all automobiles leave behind them on these dusty thoroughfares. I was amazed, as the car came along side these women, to see the old priest lean out of the car and scream at them: "Get on out of the road. Who do you think you are?" This isn't the first time this has happened, according to report, but it was the first time I had actually seen it.

Back home, I continue at my typewriter until five, when I joined Aunt Cammie to hear the disheartening news of the vast wreckage of historic old buildings in London by Nazi bombs.

About supper time, the thermometer began dropping and by eight o'clock, when we said goodnight, after an hour of reading, the air was actually chill, with a strong breeze blowing out of the northwest.

I sat for a while before going to bed, but before ten o'clock I was ~~xxxx~~ under a nice heavy blanket and thinking how incongruous the electric fan looked sitting there in the moonlight.



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Wednesday, September 11th, 1940.

I was certainly glad Rita put a quilt on my bed last night, for a steady wind blew all night, and when I awoke at dawn, the temperature had fallen to about 50 degrees and the hot coffee which Frank served me before six o'clock was less an eye-opener than a thaw-out.

But the air was bracing and the cloudless sky somehow called for a little exercise in the big road. I accordingly took a turn across the bridge and up the river road passed Zeline's. On my way back, before eight o'clock, I stopped to say hello to Zeline and was struck by her inquiry into Robina's health. She told me that she had burned a candle for her the other day and that from the way it "pouf-pouf-poufed" horizontally, she knew that Robina wasn't quite well. I explained to her that Robina had had an accident. She said she would burn other candles for her later in the day.

From the foot of her bed, she lifted a large bundle which she said was for me. It proved to be a patch work quilt which she had made of old pieces of cloth which she had collected from warm out clothes which the mulattoes had discarded. I was enchanted, of course, on several accounts. Somehow this gaudy collection of brilliant cotton patches will always be a kind of Scarlet Sraffan for me, for in its stitches will be bound up the days of toil which good old Zeline has pieced into it, and the individual pieces of the quilt will somehow always be vibrant with the odd collection of colored personalities which at one time or another were intimately associated with the garments from which these pieces were sorted and saved.

I asked her if I might leave it with her for a day, since I wanted to wander out in the cotton patch where Joe was picking cotton.--I hadn't seen him in so long. I accordingly said goodbye to her, and taking a half over-grown lane where mules and a cow or two were grazing among the rank weeds, I followed it for quarter of a mile or so where at its end, I found the big cotton field. Joe had already partially filled a long sack with snowy cotton, as had several boys, Edward, Woodrow, Joe and several others who were finding the going easy this morning, since the air was almost cold, yet sufficiently warmed by the sun to make working conditions ideal. Thanks to the wind, too, there was no dew, and the day was probably as perfect for cotton picking as could be imagined.

I chatted with them for half an hour, and they cut across the cotton field, climbed a hedge fence, and thence across another fence to the River Road. Just as I gained the bridge, a car going toward Melrose stopped. It was Nell Glass, and I was glad to chat with her as we drove back to Melrose.

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Wednesday, September 11th, 1940 - page 2.

I ripped off a little mail before nine thirty, and sent it to the store before Aunt Cammie arrived to read from the Wailes Diary. Coffee came along a little after ten, and with it the mail,--good mail with lots of clippings, too, including one reporting the refusal of the Secretary of the Financial Branch of the French Embassy to return to France on orders from the puppet Vichy Government, saying, as he did, that he refused to serve in France under a Petain Government which obviously was controlled from Berlin. What the world doesn't know is that this man was slated for a great financial post in France about the time the war broke, and as he and his wife had always entertained lavishly in New York, I imagine that this severance of all ties with the Government must seriously effect and cut them off from an income which they probably will find difficult to do without. Of course, if Hitler is eventually thrown out and the current French Government along with it, this financial attache will probably have a high post with whatever succeeding Government which may come along. But if the present French Government should be maintained over a long period by the Nazis, then this man may find himself in as straightened circumstances as did refugees in various European countries outside of France during the French Revolution.

After dinner, Aunt Cammie and I resume our labors, until about three o'clock, when I volunteered to take some medicine for Aunt Cammie to Zeline, who that morning had told me that she sometimes "had lumonia in the top of her head".

When I arrived at her cabin, I found the front door secured, and I left the package, as pre-arranged, in a pail suspended from the ceiling of the front gallery. I accordingly be-took myself to the cotton patch away in the direction of the woods, where I found all those I had seen there in the morning, together with Zeline, wearing a huge straw hat that flopped alarmingly in the spanking breeze which was still blowing. It was ~~stax~~ surprising to see how this little old woman, now about 85 or 86 kept abreast with the youths as they all moved down the cotton rows, dragging their 9 foot sacks behind them, as with each deft movement of the hand and arm added slowly but surely to the inflation of the sack. We talked for a few minutes together, with all of them talking as they moved along toward the end of the row.s.

On reaching the end of the row, a frolic was in order for the youngsters,--boys from 11 or 12 to 13 or 14. They gambled around, jumping on the larger sacks which had already been filled with the combined smaller sacks carried by the individuals up and down the rows as they had picked that morning. They were chattering away and laughing at a great rate about some braggart whom they called "Monsieur Comment Ca-Va" and how much he could pick in a day. Edward and Joe and Wood in the meantime, were removing the cotton from the field bags just brought in and packing it tight in the larger bags which stood by the slides on which it would be drawn by a mule at sun down to the house to be stored for a day or two until it was taken to the Melrose or Natchez, La., gin. It was delicious to see the



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mellow combinatins of soft white cotton and light chocolate hands and arms as the men pulled the cotton from the stocks., pulling with supple vigor in the easy transfer of the staple from one canvas bag to the other. ~~XXXXXX~~ Zeline stood by watching the work with careless satisfaction and chatting the while about cotton crops of years gone by. As the sacks of the different field hands were dumped from the smaller to the greater receptical, there was racuous comment for each assortment from the children.

"Oh, see, that cotton they are just pulling out of that bag. See how many leaves there are in it. Look out much trash there is in it. It must be Nan's --(Zeline's) ."

And Zeline would chuckle at their jibes, and dismiss them with a wave of her hand.

When the tranfer had been made and everyone's sack was re-adjusted and the water bucket had been passed around, it was time for them to begin another long row, and so I said goodbye and headed towrd home.

Supper and afterward reading from Sydnor's Slavery in Mississippi until 8 oge ok . At my house from 8:30 until 9 to listen to Mr. Roosevelt make his first political broadcast of his 3rd term campaign. It was primarily devoted to labor and to preparedness, and delivered with his customary skill which in delivery convinces friend and foe alike that his radio personality is of the first order, and unquestionably of a persuasion that could sell ice cakes to Eskimoes if such need were the order of the day.

The night was magnificent with moon light but chilly with the constant wind as I hustled across the parterre from my house to Lyle's to sleep.

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Thursday, September 12th, 1940.

Another perfect day, a little too chilly at dawn, and the stiff breeze still blowing, but withal a composite picture of all the best of Indian Summer weather.

Aunt Cammie and I worked all morning together, so that with the plantation dinner bell came the double satisfaction of having accomplished much work and developed a healthy appetite.

Immediately afterwards, I walked across Cane River bridge and ov over along the river to Zeline's, where I hoped to find the family before they all departed for the cotton fields. I was successful.

Poor old 'oe was having trouble with his feet, and he accordingly brought out his chair in his bare feet, in perfect relaxation. Edward showed me his birth certificate which he had just purchased from the Church. One of the younger priest's was going to give it to him, but the old one appeared on the scene just as it was made out and announced that it would cost one dollar. Edward learned too that according to the church record he was born on the 17th of June, 1922 instead of the 16th, as he had supposed. I reckon this git of a day subtracted from his life record was due to the christening rather than to the actual date of his advent.

For the infinite amount of thoughtfulness which Aunt Cammie has bestowed in Zeline's direction in keeping her well supplied with medecine, food and cloth for dresses and household use, I suppose Zeline wanted to make a return gift by way of appreciation. Fortunately for me, I have had the pleasure of being the messenger in these kindnesses on Aunt Cammie's part, and so as a gesture, Zeline presented me with a bed quilt she had made of scores of little colored pieces, taken at random from old dresses, shirts, and heaven knows what all. The design was simple but exceptional, as only some one like good old Zeline could fashion. The dominate note was polka-dots,--little squares and triangles of reds and blues,--all of them bearing polka-dots in white, with additional pieces in the same design with the background in all varieties of shades running through pale pink to cobalt. Somehow all these polka-do s scattered through the center of the quilt suggested a flurry of snow-flakes on a prismatic fi ld contrived of a jumbled rain-bow, and the effect was both mulato and charming. For a border all the way around, other little pieces of solid colors and figured material but not polka-dots. The reverse side was a single design of red backgro ground with a small branch like design running through it.

Even though the present was basically for Aunt Cammie's goodness, I was touched that it had been presented, as for me, and somehow all the millions of stitches and the evidence of a hundred garments that mulatoes have worn will always endear both the donor and the gift.



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Thursday, September 12th, 1940 - page 2.

Just as I decided to leave, after smoking a cigarette, Zeline brought out lemonade which she had been making in her living room, kitchen and bedroom of the old dirt floor cabin. There was some for Joe and me and for Edward and the three or four little boys who were frisking around, delighted at the delay which my presence brought in starting back to the cotton patch.

But five minutes longer, and I said good bye, and headed back toward Melrose with my patch-work quilt under my arm.

Aunt Cammie and I resume our work until coffee time, when Aunt Cammie went over to my house to continue ~~xxxx~~ her labor on the slip covers while I remained at my typewriter.

At five I joined her, listened to the news with Henry whom she had asked to stay for the news, too, when he had come to ask her some question about weaving. Afterwards, I took my shower, and started to slip into fresh clothes when I discovered that there were no socks in my dresser draw. This morning there had been several pairs there and Rita had put some more there this noon. This was really exceptional, since no one had ever invaded the sanctity of one of the cabins before. Obviously it must have been a stupid fellow, since he had absconded with all the supply. If he had only contented himself with a few pair I probably would never have missed them. Aunt Cammie declared that there would be something done about that on the morrow. I reckon that Mat is the guilty culprit.

The supper bell rang shortly and afterwards Carolyn Dormon and her sister, Virginia, dropped by for a half hour. Carolyn said she was taking a vacation without pay from the planting job she is doing for State Buildings. The nursery which she and Virginia are lavishing so much time on near Chestnut, La., seems to be coming along as they would have it. Her book on the Cherokee Indians is also growing apace. I hope it will be a better seller than her excellent work on Louisiana Wild Flowers, --but as Aunt Cammie says, -- "It really doesn't matter what happens. The Dormons are the luckiest people in the world for even though they may not be getting anywhere, what with the enervating variety of their undertakings, they are happy, and that's all that really counts."

Eight o'clock, and we said good night. There was a beautiful full moon, with all the suggestion of Autumn in the air. Grandpa was waiting for me at the foot of the stairs of the big house, and walked home to Lyle's with me. Five minutes later I was under the covers and Grandpa asleep on my feet, in lieu of a soap-stone.

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Friday, September 13th, 1940.

It ought to be a good day if the superstition about such a date line counts.

It was another in the succession of perfect dawns that broke around 5:30 when Frank arrived with coffee.

But the brisk air gave added flavor to the excellence of the Louisiana brew, and I was up and at my mail before six o'clock.

When my breakfast arrived, I learned that already the disappearance of the socks had been gone into pretty thoroughly. Everyone of course had denied it, and all were in the throes of outrage to learn that any suspicion had been directed toward anyone. Mat, it would appear, is the guilty one, although I am not sure. I rather suspect that Mary might have shared in the booty, since she has tried, unbeknownst to most people, to get away with food, and I shouldn't be surprised if Mat may have shared with her, -- particularly in as she told me she had seen Sam going in my house. At the time Mat tried to get away with 24 pounds of sugar and a couple of pails of pears, Mary was in that pretty little piece of theirvery, and I reckon she wants to keep Mat from suspicion in this silly business in order to save him from talking too much and revealing that she put him up to one thing and another.

Aunt Cammie came over a little before ten. There wasn't much mail, and as soon as we were done with our coffee, we got on with our transcription of the Diary.

A little after eleven, we began looking for Mary Lambdin and her family, since they were expected for dinner, but twelve o'clock came and they hadn't appeared, so, in accordance with her policy of always serving meals on schedule for the convenience of those, like J. H. and Eugene who must observe a routine, dinner went on as usual. There was an extra guest whom J. H. had brought, and just as the soup had been served, voices from the garden revealed that Mary and Jeff and Waldo and Mary's sister in law, Mrs. Henderson, had come.

They had encountered detours near Cloutierville, and of course had had a flat in the midst of the clouds of dust. They accordingly wanted to brush off and rinse off a bit, so that by the time the diners had increased by four in number, the soup course was finished for the first sitters just as the second arrivals had arrived. Henceforth the dinner was rather amusing, with vegetables, chicken and what not passing around the table as six of us were in the midst of our soup.

But the first group, including the guest, Payne, J. H. and Eugene were done, the rest of us relaxed somewhat and concluded our dinner leisurely.

After dinner we all made a tour of the several houses, and Aunt Cammie and Mary went to the loom room to talk with Henry about Mary's new loom and what design she will have it laced up for,



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while Jeff and Mrs. Henderson, and Waldo and I did a little round a second time to take pictures of the African house and all.

Half an hour later, when we had ended our tour at the big house, Mrs. Henderson asked if she might have a glass of water. Jeff said he could stand one too, and of course Waldo followed suit. I asked them to saunter into the library where it was cool and that I would serve them immediately. They said not to bother that they would go with me.

With them in toe, I accordingly went to the pantry, hoping to find a bottle of cold water in the ice box. They peered in too, but there wasn't any water there. I tried to "sell" them milk,-- of which there was plenty, but with no success. Buttermilk also was turned down. They explained that even though the water weren't cold, they would find it good. I went to the water pail in the kitchen, but to my dismay found it empty. They ask if they just couldn't draw some out of the faucet then in the kitchen. I allowed as how they might but that I foresaw the possibility they might also draw typhoid, too, since that water came from the lake. They demurred on that score.

I accordingly asked them to wait while I drew some water from the cistern. They would wait. But search as I might, and search as I did, if the rope by which the bucket could be lowered and raised, could not be located. By this time, one harmless glass of water was beginning to take on extraordinary proportions.

Having failed ~~it~~ in my attempt to palm off milk and buttermilk in place ~~of~~ of the water, it occurred to me that I might persuade them to hazard coca-cola,--unless they preferred to dive into the cistern. Everyone agreed that coca-cola would be dandy. I disentangled myself from them long enough to fly upstairs where the coca-cola is kept. Fortunately there were ample bottles there. Back down stair I marched triumphantly. Of course they would have ice in the drink. They concurred. And so to the ice box I went, took out a tray of the frosty cubes, and so back to the kitchen, where I held the tray under the hot water faucet and turned the spigot. To my surprise, not a drop of water appeared,--neither hot nor cold. This seemed about the limit, and we all roared.

But I set the tray out in the sun, and eventually it loosened enough to bang out some cubes. With the glasses well stocked with ice, I went to open the bottles, only to discover that someone had used the opener and had failed to return it to its accustomed place. I thought I knew where an opener might be found upstairs, and up again I went, returning in triumph. And thus Mrs. Henderson and all had their drink,--even though it wasn't water, and I suppose it was better than milk, but I hope it succeeded in quenching their thirst.

We then joined Mary and Aunt Cammie in the loom room where ten minutes later Frank appeared with lemonade. Mrs. Henderson said she would prefer coffee, if she could have it, and Aunt Cammie said she certainly could, if she wished. On second

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Mrs. Henderson decided she would like both the lemonade and coffee, and so Frank served her and the rest of us with the lemonade, and then returned and built a fire and prepared ~~the~~ coffee

Water, milk, buttermilk, lemonade, coffee....all I can say is that you don't have to be, but it certainly helps out a lot if you are.....

While the ladies "loomed", I was glad of the opportunity to chat with Mr. Ambdin whom I like much, and with whom I had never had a chance to speak at length before, even though I had been a guest at Edgewood, their lovely home in Pine Ridge, Miss.

About four, we all said goodbye, as they had to return to Alexandria, whence they had driven this morning, and hence to Natchez where they had to be before night. Mary promised to return within 10 days or a couple of weeks to work on her new loom and I hope that Jeff will be able to return with her.

Aunt Cammie was tired, and I hoped she would get a nap before supper. I went back to my forsaken typewriter until five o'clock, when, in returning from Lyle's to my house, I found Aunt Cammie lying down and listening to the European broadcast of Nazi's ~~news~~ bombing Buckingham Palace and general misere over England.

Supper at 5:30, and conversation and reading in Aunt Cammie's room until eight, when, with grandpa in toe, I threaded my way through the shadows of the hedge, cast ~~m~~ by a chilly but magnificent moon, and so was asleep before nine.



Saturday, September 14th, 1940.

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Even though the human world both near and far seems awry, the elements combined toward perfection in the physical perfection today. A silver dawn, a cloudless sky, a brilliant sun tempered by steady, mild breezes, and at the close of day a moon, round and mellow which, as the breeze died down, brought trees and sky and cotton fields and stars into an unparalleled cohesion.

I awoke before dawn had filtered through the fog banks which enclosed the gardens in a heavy curtain of dew, --coffee, and before seven my breakfast which Frank had prepared for me, since Mary always arrives too late to get it ready if I am going for a walk.

By seven sharp, I was swinging down the big road, and glad to be alive,--what with the beauty of the cotton fields, the bracing, cool morning air, and the velvety feeling of the road-way which seemed like a vast carpet of high-piled rugs beneath my feet.

Along the lane, I talked with an old darkie who was preparing for fence building, learning something about when cows should be turned into a hay field and when they shouldn't be, and a little further a long the road with a horseman who had much to say about the oneness of horse and rider under trying circumstances, although the theory was expressed in metaphors, many of which I didn't comprehend and none that I remember.

And so for many a mile, and eventually to a turn in the cement highway where Payne came along and picked me up, whisking me back to Melrose a mile a minute and better so that I was back at my desk before nine.

Aunt Cammie and I worked at my desk in Lyle's house for a little while. She is extremely tired. Forces of discord are rampant, both in the servant's circle and in the other brackets. Harmony will be fought for an won temporarily, but I'm afraid I know how transitory these lulls will be. Thirst will frequently distain the wroiled Spring, when other sources are less troubled, and under the circumstances the sediments of discoloration are going to be kept stirring henceforth, and the mistaken need for a martyrdom will scarcely restrain the wroilers.

The mail was thin. Denton was vocal for its silence. There was a letter from Robina, saying that she expected to spend Sunday at Briarwood with Carolyn Pormann and her sister, Virginia. I suppose Briarwood is perhaps 40 or 50 miles from Melrose.

Dinner and afterwards a half hour of work together before Aunt Cammie undertook a siesta.

For my part I walked over to the gin and thence across the bridge, and so along Cane River for a couple miles in the warm sun tempered by the bracing breeze. On my return, I met Terrance Madelaine or possibly Madelin, in the road. He is a nice boy,--muscular and industrious, but withal inclined toward the bottle.

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Even when Terrance is intoxicated, they say he is always good natured, but if others try to torment him, he protests, and if his admonitions to leave him alone aren't observed, he wields a razor dexterously, and always to the dismay of the aggressor.

Terrance told me he was headed for Clarence Compton's where he had been working all week. The hands are paid off on Saturday afternoon, he said, and now he was going to get his wage. As we chatted, Clarence Compton came by in his truck. He is a fine looking mulatto, in his forties, I suppose, who had married a widow of one of the Jones heirs, and so came into considerable property. He asked us to ride with him and we did. Lyle had entertained the Compton's here at his house one afternoon, and ~~xxxxxxx~~ had never forgotten it, so Clarence told me.

Arriving at his house, I noticed 15 or 20 hands loitering about the yard. They obviously were awaiting Clarence's return.

He asked me to come in, but at first I demurred, saying I had merely been out for a stroll, with no intention of calling on any one, ~~but~~ and further more I realized that of all times of the week, in view of Saturday night settlements with the hands, this was about as inopportune time to call as one might choose. But he seemed rather disappointed, and after asking me in again, I accepted, and found his wife ~~in~~ on the enclosed sun-porch, ~~was~~ sewing at a machine in one corner. I was impressed by the attractive draperies which hung at the windows.

We chatted of Cane River things, and I was enchanted with his wife's voice, it was so soft and clear. Orders went out to the kitchen for coffee, and shortly an attractive, almost white maid arrived, bearing a large tray with fine china and coffee. The cups were large,--rather over-size coffee-cups, holding possibly as much as a full glass of water would hold. I liked the china, and I liked the coffee, and I liked the quality of the Compton voices and the two or three little children who came in and out as we sipped our brew.

What with the chatting and all on my part, I was behind the others in finishing my fulsome portion, and I was impressed when the attractive servant came in to take the cups, found that I had not finished and sat down on a large sofa opposite me, tray in hand to await my pleasure. I insisted on drinking all of my coffee, even though I did so rather more rapidly than I should have preferred, it was so hot. Besides I wanted to relish the pleasure I experienced in this unexpected service attendant upon me.

But it was now past time for the hands to receive their wages, and Clarence's wife was turning through the check book as she chatted, anxious, I felt, to keep the conversation going, but at the same time, mindful of those who waited without. I accordingly said goodbye, and started up the river road toward the Church, when Terrance came running behind me. He wanted to walk with me, and together we trudged back together.



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Back home before supper, and afterward a little tour of the gardens with Aunt Mammie who is concerned over the fate of her magnolias,--the young ones,--which are likely to be lost because of the dryness. Hal a dozen faucets in various groups of lilies, dahlias, and rare bushes were accordingly attached with long and short pieces of hose, and the garden got a good soaking before weretired to read before seven o'clock.

But we read little, for Aunt Mammie had not be able to sleep in the afternoon, and was still exhausted. And so we said goodnight before eight.

Just before going to sleep at Lyle's I found that there were ne'er a cigarette for me with my morning cup of coffee, and I accordingly dressed and walked out through the moon-drenched garden, and down across Cane River,--placid as a mirror, and over to the saloon.

Long before I arrived, I thought of what "Cotton Time" means to the darkies. Most of them have been picking this week, and thus making more than their usual week's ~~xxx~~ stipend. They were now enjoying the fruits of their labors, and the sound of racuous laughter filtered out from the saloon gallery, seemingly softened as it struck the moonlight and filtered as it passed over the river.

Inside the place was alive and vibrant. The walls almost seemed to be made of some elastic material that permitted them to expand and contract as high and boisterous enthusiasms expanded but seldom seemed to contract in the human vitality and vigor.

A thin, attractive dark mulato girl, possibly 16 or 17, approached the bar, already crowded with men and boys. They made way for her to balance her 10 or 12 mont's old baby beside the corner where the bar turns, and in a rather delicate voice she asked for a bottle of Riegal's beer, neatly placing the money for it half way across the bar, as a deposed Dutchess might have placed a pearl of great price on the gambling tables at Monte Carlo. Somehow the money to her seemed more than money,--rather something like a symbol which held the promise of gaiety to a soul which too young had lost most hope for it in the life which stretched ahead of her. Before drinking from the bottle herself, she gave the baby a drink, and to my surprise, the baby seemed to like it. Another small child, possibly about 2 years old, clutched at her dress in the shadows down below the top of the bar. The little one was quieted accordingly after the same manner that the baby had been regaled. I purchased my cigarettes and stepped out into the night. It was all calm along the river, and the bridge too was calm, save for shadowy figures headed toward the saloon. Cotton picking time means a realization of certain pet up aspirations. Poor mulatos, poor colored people, poor white people, who can't seem to do anything about spreading cotton time further through the year and softening the desperations which come with so little ready cash.

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Sunday, September 15th, 1940.

I am so in the habit of dating the pages I am transcribing from the D. L. J. Wailes Diary these days with the year, 1858, that nearly always as I start my Journ, I insitinctively put down 1858 instead of 1940.

But getting around to the present, I must remark upon the perfection of the weather,--all sunshine and delightful cool breezes with a stilling of the winds at sundown and the appearance of a luscious mellow round moon night after night.

I spent my early morning, in a prologued breakfast and in listening to the European news broadcasts, and so back to my typewriter, with Aunt Mammie and me transcribing until ten o'clock when the family arrived and put a stop to such pleasures.

Dinner and dishing at noon, and thence into the big road, riding as far as Bermuda with Eugene, and so walked back along the river road which was grand, save when passing automobiles,--which were many,--brought up clouds of dust to engulf the traveler on foot before it was blown away.

Reaching Ashley Kirkland's saloon, hard by the River bank and set in its grove of china berry trees, I stopped off to quench my thirst. There were many mulato men on the gallery, and more, if possible, within where a large group of them were playing cards,--21, I suppose, the game might have been. Several of the players spoke to me, calling me by name, but the brightness of the sun outside had so altered my vision that I couldn't see well enough within the enclosure to distinguish the various faces, although I did recognize Marvin, who, having a holiday from Bill's bar by "elrose bridge, had obviously come up to Ashley's to spend his "bus-man's holiday".

In the room where the men were gambling, no drinks were served, but a good natured big mulato, sensing that I was in need of sustenance, accompanied me to a side door, between the two buildings which constitute the saloon, and there we found the bar doing a brisk business.

It reminded me of prohibition days when I arrived in New York harbor one evening at sundown. In those days the bars on incoming boats were sealed as the boat crossed the three mile limit. In those days, too, the port of New York was closed at 5 or 6 o'clock, so that liners arriving



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had to anchor in the shadow of the Statue of Liberty until the next day.

On this particular trip, we had reached the Statue just too late to land at our pier, and so with the bar closed, it looked like a dull night ahead of the hundreds of passengers who were so near the speak-easies of Manhattan, in the distance, and yet so far.

After dinner, however, I remember how the door to the bar had remained sealed, but how a little low door around behind the bar which never had been sealed formed an opening wedge to circumvent the full application of the Prohibition law, and how we had all crawled on our hands and knees through this little door, and so come up smiling in the bar itself, and so spent a delightful night in the Shadow of Miss Liberty, with the aid and comfort of the magnificently stock cellar of the liner at our disposal.

Ashley's place seemed a little like that. The front door was closed. The gaming room adjoining it in no way connected with the bar, and yet by the simple process of walking between the two buildings and using the side door one could find plenty of companionship and cheer within.

And so after a round, I continued my jaunt back to "elrose from the sound of voices as I passed by the library, gathered at visitors had broken down the gates. I learned later that it was the Scarboroughs,--Jr. and Seniors, from Natchitoches and Shreveport. But I kept right on going, and so accomplished a shave and a shower before supper time.

Frank came to announce the evening repast. He maintained himself with ever so slight a suggestion of having fallen off the water-wagon. I noticed it first at seven o'clock this morning. I certainly hope this doesn't entail a lot of domestic problems for him as did his last flight into liquids.

When the guests and famil and family had departed, and we were alone, I found that Aunt "ammie was exhausted from too much Sunday. We accordingly sat for an hour in her room, but there was no reading tonight. A little after seven, I said goodnight,--what with the arrival of another member of the family, and so betook myself for a walk down to cane river bridge, to see the splendid finger of gold, which the newly gilded church steeple made above the great fringe along the margin of the water, and a duplicate of the same dark screen and shining finger of gold reflected on the placid silver surface of the water itself. It was a calm night and grand. I sat for a time to smoke a cigarette, and so wended my way back home where I was in bed at Lyle's before nine.

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Monday, September 16th, 1940 -

All remains perfection in the weather,--all sunshine, warm and dazzling, but tempered by a breeze from the West which keeps the thermometer at just the right spot. The sky remains an arch of blue, save for little scattered cotton-like puffs of clouds which never seem to get between the earth and the sun. The moon too remains "radiant and lovely, the Queen of the Night".

Last night they "waked" Odysseus Broux. He was a 32 year old mulato who had lived all his life on "elrose.

A few years back he was the rage among "the lady-folks". And yet what is ever his cham may have been, it must have been hidden, for outwardly he didn't seem so very remarkable. Scarlet Fever, in his younger years had horribly disfigured his face, and his manner was so average it was almost unnoticeable, and yet the mulato women fought over him as though he were the one and old Greek god whom "an "iver had produced. In one year it was said, he had more illegitimate children to his credit than any other man could account for in a decade. Under the circumstances, it is curious that he didn't take more flights into,--shall we say matrimony, or merely "taking-up". Some girl, called "Teeny", begot Earle,--one of "at's little baseball players, by Odysseus, and having found one child good by him, she begot another, although when he suggested "taking-up" she flatly refused. I suppose constancy was a big item in her concept of a man to live with, and so she preferred to go in for an occasional round with Odysseus instead of risking a common roof which she was smart enough to realize would not shelter a monogamous bed.

Some time back,--possibly a couple of years or so, Odysseus developed tuberculosis. He began wasting away rapidly, and it was the surprise of everyone that he was so long in sufling off this mortal coil. I believe he lived with his mama, or possibly a companion, in a cabin back in the cotton patch from whence he hasn't moved for a 12th month. On Sunday night at nine, while the moon was riding high over "elrose, a dog howled,--and according to superstition, this means that someone has died. This time, it was Odysseus. And so yesterday he was carried back several miles to St. Mary's on the Bayou of "ittle River, and there last night, according to "uny, they "waked" him. Today at one o'clock they will bury him Sic "ransit "loria mundi,--or whatever the cook's husband, the Reverend Sauerwell, will say over the grave of this Can River Don Juan.

Aunt "ammie and I got started with our Diary business rather early yesterday morning, being finished with it by the time the mail arrived belatedly., after Aunt "ammie had deserted me for Sam Brown to whom she was giving instructions as to the planting of iris which Carolyn "ormon had brought her from the "abillon place new Lafayette, Louisiana. Together, in the "oom room, we sat to run over the mail,--New York, Denton, Shreveport and Detroit. Robina's lester spoke of a trip she may make to New Mexico on



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Wednesday of this week, and Stephen Henry, from Detroit, spoke of having flown up there from Camp Anox, with a plane and pilot at his disposal for a few days while he is going over the General Motors plant, with a view, I suppose, of checking up on facilities in that manufacturing unit, for the manufacturing of war materials.

Dinner at noon, and afterward ~~some~~ moment or two with the radio. Today Mr. Roosevelt signs the Conscription Bill, which gives America a new twist in the development of his resources of youth. Surely it will effect the homes of most American citizens I'm wondering if there is much regret on the part of American fathers and mothers that their sons will henceforth, on reaching 21, have to spend a year in military training. I am also wondering if this will effect Mr. Roosevelt's chances of being elected for a third term.

In talking with Terrance the other day, I was interested in his reaction to military training. He ~~is~~ mind worked along these lines: "I am a mulato, and I can't hope to earn more than 50 cents a day, for which I work hard, and spread over the year, I make much less than 50 cents a day. If I am drafted to train in the Army for a year, I'll get my clothes and my food, and \$20.00 a month for the first three months, and \$30.00 a month for the balance. I will not need money during this period, since the Government provides for my needs. Therefore, after working no harder than I do on Cane River, I'll come out of my year's training knowing more and much richer than when I went in."

In the afternoon, about two o'clock, Aunt Cammie, Celeste and her mother, Mrs. Rigard, and I went to Watchitoches to see Rachel Field's movie: "All This And Heaven Too." I liked it. When Charles Boyer, as the Duke and Bette Davis, as the governess, spoke of "eulan, where the Vaux-Fraslin chateau was located, my mind swept back several years when one rain day Christian and I had left the Montaignebleau - Paris train at "eulan and walked through the cobblestone streets of the town, and up the long road that leads from the river up to the plateau to the east. I remembered some haystacks there where we sought shelter from the down pour, and the vast landscape which stretched away toward Vaux-Fraslin and Vaux-le-Vicomte, where Fouquet had 300 years before entertained Louis XIV so lavishly, and where in our day, the Commiers, great Paris bankers, had maintained the old place,--chateau by "ansard and gardens by "eNotre, so beautifully in keeping with its original concept and period. With Vaux in the hands of the Nazi's today, and with the Commiers in jail, I suppose, since the radio says the 200 families of France are to be tried for something or other,--I am wondering what has happened or is happening or may happen to Vaux before the world is turned right side up again.

Back home before seven, Aunt Cammie and I had supper along, and chatted for a little while, before I said goodnight, and so took my walk down to the bridge before going to bed at nine.

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Tuesday, Sept. 17th, 1940 - page 1.

"Another perfect day,--all blue sky, hot sunshine and a cool breeze.

The morning ran along as yesterday,--early breakfast, plenty of out-going mail, thin in-coming mail and joint operations with Aunt Cammie on old Mr. Wailes' opus.

Aunt Cammie had in mind to take a nap about eleven, but only got as far as reclining on her sofa, for O. Ross Pharis, from Many, La., dropped by to have dinner here.

Whenever I see him, I inevitably think of the time in my little house, when Frank came to serve us our afternoon coffee, and Ross asked Frank if he was Sam Brown's brother, since they looked so much alike. Frank, after all, is obviously a mulato, while very definitely Sam is a negro. Frank's hand gripped the coffee tray a little tighter, pitched his voice a little lower than usual, and said: "No, he ain't no kin of mine".

By two o'clock, Mr. Pharis had gone, Aunt Cammie had not had her nap, and we took up an hour of work again where we had dropped it at 11 o'clock.

By three, Frank arrived with lemonade and Aunt Cammie departed for the loom house to weave, and consult with Henry on the lacing up of Mary's loom on which she will come to work next week.

I walked over to the gin to see the white foam come tumbling out of the shoot and pressed into bale after bale of cotton. Someone told me, while there, of a little boy of color who down at Henryville a few years ago, had ~~xxx~~ somehow been pushed into a stream of cotton as it was piling up for a bale, and how the machine had pressed the cotton down, child and all, and how the poor thing had been discovered only when the bale was removed from the press, just his little black feet sticking out from the side of the snowy bale.

Last night the Melrose gin had run for a while after supper, catching up on the surplus cotton which had accumulated, but this afternoon the gin was out-stepping the cotton-pickers, and by three thirty it had shut down for a couple of hours while additional fresh cotton was being hauled in from the fields in wagons and trucks.

I had thought of dropping around to chat with Melrose for a few moments, and so I ~~fx~~ left the gin and headed down the road and across Cane River bridge, stopping on the otherside for a moment to chat with Bill in the saloon. Somehow we fell to talking about the difference between his place and Ashley Kirkland's on the Bermuda (La Cote d'oyeuse) road, and as to the relative popularity of the two places. He told me that he thought his patronage was the more steady of the two, saying that there were



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undoubtedly several factors tending to make this so,--the fact that Ashley was from New Orleans and Bill was a Cane River boy, that Ashley's personality was not quite so well adjusted to his neighbors as his own, and perhaps one of the most important elements, the fact that because of the neighborhood in which Ashley's place is situated, Ashley must cater exclusively to mulattoes, while Bill can serve both mulatto and negro.

As Bill said this, through my mind swam the line from So Red The Rose in which the author has one of his characters remark: "Show me a nigger, and I'll show you a snob".

To me it is interesting that Bill and Ashley, both mulattoes, and both running saloons within a equal radius from Melrose, successfully operate their respective places of business along quite different color lines. In Ashley's neighborhood, I suppose the mulatto dominates to the extent of possibly 90 per cent, while about the same per centage dominates Bill's locality, and yet Ashley would be out of business immediately if he served any of the negroes living on Melrose, while Bill can serve them and does without jeopardizing his personal popularity or his business activities. Perhaps Ashley's dance hall, located across the road from his saloon, may determine in part the reason why he must not serve negroes, since the mulattoes might resent the presence of a negro in the dance hall, while Bill, on the other hand, operates no dance hall, merely having a large room behind his bar where sometimes his customers dance to a mechanical music box, although nothing by way of a dance for a dance's sake, is ever engineered there.

If you, who have never known Cane River, should glance over this page and puzzle at this color distinction, and dismiss the fuss and feathers stirred up as between the line of color demarking mulatto from negro, you may possibly understand the feeling if you ever are classed by a black man as one,--white and mulatto.

But all this conversation wasn't getting me up to Zeline's, and so I said goodbye to Bill and wended my way up the River Road. At the second little house on the right, between the road and the river, Madame Madelin, from the shade of her gallery sang out: "Bon Jour, Monsieur Francois. Ma Cousine, Zeline, n'est pas chez-elle". and so I turned in at the little picket gate, passed under the china berry trees in front of the house, and joined Madame Madelin, "her old man" as she refers to her husband, and a grand daughter in white duck slacks, and a little boy, fat and fourteen,--all of them, save Madame Madelin having obviously stopped for a moment from their cotton picking to enjoy a moments shade and a drink from the water bucket on the gallery. I sat on the steps and chatted with them all for possibly five minutes, and then turned an attentive ear to Madame Madelin, when the other three had returned to the picking of cotton in the field hard by.

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Madame Madelinis mulatto but prefers to refer to herself as "Creole". She is in her 70's and is as sprightly, plump and twittering as a sparrow on a cold sunny day, busying itself about the meal in the road where it has spilled from a horse's feed-bag.

Terrance, her son, is a youth of some 26 summers, the only one of her 13 children still living at home. He is strong and agile and cross-eyed. He's kindly, too, and never quarrelsome but let him be slightly under the weather with drink and for no fault of his own, suddenly become the object of pranks by his friends and neighbors, congregating at the saloon, and the tormentors had better watch out. "For at such times, Terrance can take care of him self. For he his quick with his knife at such times, and more than one buffon has felt the keen edge of Terrance's blade when their foolishness with Terrance has gone too far.

Madame Madelin spoke of her son to me. She knows I like him and she has heard him express a certain regard for me.

"Terrance is a good boy", she confided. "Sometimes he drinks too much. Last Saturday night he got drunk at the saloon and couldn't walk. But I've always told Bill to bring him home when he can't walk any more. Saturday night Bill brought him home. He knocked at my gate, and I came out and they helped me bring him in. He lay still in his bed for a while, and then sat up on the edge, and said: "Mama, I want to go back to the saloon". But I told him he was too drunk, and I took off his shoes, for they were full of dust and would spoil the sheets, and so Terrance went back to sleep and didn't wake up until nearly noon.

"I always drip him his coffee when he first wakes up. He said "Mama, I don't believe I want anything. It feels like my grub is up here in my chest". But I made him his coffee just the same, and he drank it and then he wanted his breakfast.

"Sunday night he went to the dance at Ashley's, and Monday morning he got up early,--soon, soon, soon, and was away to work for Mr. Compton before day light. Terrance is a good boy and works hard all week. Of course he drinks sometimes, but he's good and when I'm old Terrance will always take care of me."

She spoke of the war, which, I gathered she thought of,--and possibly with wisdom, as being the same thing as conscription. She hoped he wouldn't have to go,--what with his crossed eyes and his right wrist. I asked about that and she said that years ago someone,--a Cutie,--had shot him through the palm of his hand and the bullet had come out two or three inches below the wrist on the inside of the arm. His wrist swells up, she said, when he does hard work. "Maybe that would keep him from going to war. What did I think? I thought probably it would.

Switching away from the possibility of hostilities, I remarked upon how pretty her view was from her house. She took me around to the back from the gallery of which we could see the



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see the lotus flowers growing along the margin of Cane River down a little slope behind the house, and across the river there stood Felix Mettoyer's house in a clump of pecane trees, and further on the Melrose gin and then the chimneys of the several houses of Melrose itself.

We had walked through the house to the gallery, and I remarked to her house nicely it was aranged inside, and how nice the gallery wa in back. She said she did like it there,--she could see the Melrose bridge and the horses and riders and cars passing over it in the day time. She said she like the river so near, too, for in the evening she and her family could go down there and bath, and that was handy. And at night, the lights from Melrose looked so pretty off there in the dark.

We came back to the front gallery,--through rooms rather barren but spotlessly clean and orderly. The beds were as white as snow.

I asked her if she remembered the sudden wind which had blown s so unexpectedly at mid-night, possibly on August 20th. She assured me that she ~~did~~ did. On that night, she said, she had jumped from her bed, seized the Holy Water and hastily sprinkled it in the four corners of the room, dropping it only to take up her beads and say all the prayers she knew, so that the house wouldn't be blown over into the river. She said "the old man", had just laughed at her from his bed and said that nothing was going to happen. "Of course, it didn't", she remarked almost ruefully, but "one never knows".

A few chickens were playing around under the chie berry trees, and she explained that she was raising these as best she might, in anticipation of a long and lean winter. The first year they came here to live in this house, Mr. Compton,--the owner of this property through here, let them raise two rows of corn, and with this they had raised chickens to help them through the winter. But after that Mr. Compton wouldn't let them raise any corn, saying that he needed all the land for cotton, and so she hadn't raised many chickens this year because she didn't have the moeny to buy corn to feed them. Mr. Compton, as a mulato, is certainly learning many of the customs of his white plantation copestors.

But Madame Madelin by now had forgotten her family in the cotton patch, and I felt they would be coming for more water if she didn't appear there soon, and so I said au revoir, and returned to Melrose. I found Sister and her husband there, and sister was still thinking of the picture we had seen yesterday,--all this and heaven too. She wanted me to tell her everything I knew about the Duchesse de Praslin. Her insane jealousy had evidently impressed Sister. Possibly movies like books do sometimes make us think as well as entertain,--particularly if they mirror our own experiences and inclinations.

Five o'clock and time for the news, so Aunt Cammie cam to my house to hear it, calling Henry to come to listen too.

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I galloped through a shower afterwards, and so a little late to supper before six.

A round in the garden, and afterwards half a hour of reading from Sydnor with Aunt Cammie in her room. Up to this late hour, neither had she had her nap nor had I seen Zeline.

And so at seven thirty we said goodnight, and I stopped off in the kitchen for some ice cubes to go with the coca-cola which Aunt Cammie had sent over to Lyle's house for a drink before retiring. I heard Aunt Cammie's radio go on, and I realized she must be about to enjoy a long deferred nap on her sofa as programs on the air came and went.

The moon, not quite so large as last night's was just struggling over the crepe-myrtles by the bindery. I took the ice over to Lyle's and then headed down the garden path and out into the big road for one more turn before retiring. Beyond the bridge, the lights shone brightly from the Saloon. A dozen patrons and hangers on including mulato planters, - Bill Jones and Clarence Compton - were among those playing that famous gambling game of 21 which I have never yet understood.

Edward's papa, Wood Antee, was among those watching the game. He asked me to join him in a beer. We talked cotton and Cane River. He said he hoped to get Edward in a CCC camp this winter after the cotton and all was in. He wanted to send his several other smaller boys to school as long as he could. Education, he said, would do them no harm. It was because of ~~ignorance~~ ignorance, he said, that the people who used to own Cane River, had lost their property. He hoped his children would have a better chance.

Before nine we said goodnight, and I re-crossed the bridge, and walked slowly up the road toward home between the fields of cotton on either side, soft and shimmering in the moonlight.

Back home, I ~~undressed~~ undressed without turning on the lights, the moon was to bright by this time. I had a quick cold bath, and two seconds later was asleep in bed.



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Wednesday, September 18th, 1940.

Continued perfection in the weather,--all blue and gold with a breeze.

Beneath the fig and the pecane trees, dried leaves rattle of little Grandpa, Jr., followed by Meinzie and Lady gon frisking by, but otherwise the summer holds fast, with the crepe-myrtles still blooming bravely, the dahlias taking on a brighter hue and the Guernsey or Ressurrection lilies, in double rows about the formal plot surrounding the African house, bursting into a red that is just off cranberry.

Before dinner and afterward, Aunt Mammie and I worked together. At three o'clock Charles Mazurette came up from his farm back on Little River and I talked with him for a while about his cotton, two bales of which he had had ginned this morning.

And unusual person, Charles, having spent all his thirty odd years in New Orleans to come up here to find contentment on his farm five miles back in the bayous on Little River, and heaven only knows how near his nearest neighbor may be. Probably we are the nearest, as a matter of fact.

It is curious, too, that having lived all his life in a state which has such a large colored population, Charles seems to find little or no basis or common denominator in his contacts with them. Ida, his wife, who spent the summer with him, has now returned to her school in New Orleans, and I believe Charles is as happy to be alone as he was to have her companionship., for they say it was only that.

Charles, they say, has some sort of an income which doesn't make him dependant upon his farm. In speaking with him regarding his costs for cotton as compared with the price at which he sold, he said he just about came out even, although he may have made a little. He said he watched this relationship of costs and returns because of his interest in the whole problem of tenancy, day labor, etc., and his curiosity to find out if there is any fairness in the break those who aren't land-holders are getting. I shall be interested to learn of his conclusions after he has farmed it for a while.

In the afternoon, I went over to the Helrose gin to watch the miracle of the mounds of cotton being swept from the trucks, through the gin and out into 500 pound bales. I visited the seed room, too, and was struck by the appearance of the etherial icecycles suspended from the rafters of this large building adjoining the gin, and into which the seed is blown as it is separated from the staple. Somehow it reminded me of a drug store window in December, tricked out with rather poor taste to suggest the approach of the holiday season.

After supper, Aunt Mammie and I read from Sydnor's Slavery

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in Mississippi.

It was interesting to notice the considerable quotation which the author had made from B.L.C. Wailes' Diary, which Mrs. Brandon had let him use some years ago, and also the extensive material he quoted from Ingraham's 's South-West by a Yankee.

In the afternoon, in working on the Wailes Diary, I had been delighted to see that this same Ingraham, who had written the South West in 1835, was a guest of Mr. Wailes during the summer of 1858 in Washington, Miss.

In conversation with J. A., I was interested to learn, too, that after this hundred years has past since Ingraham spoke of the mania for cotton raising in Mississippi, that Mississippi in 1940 is still one of the great cotton raising states, being second only to Texas for cotton production. I was a little surprised to learn that in 1940 Louisiana is fourth in cotton culture, with Oklahoma, I believe, or Arkansas, being ahead of her.

Eight o'clock and we said good night. The moon, and little older and slower in rising, was just over the horizon. I accordingly took to the big road, walking down to the bridge, along the margin of the river for a ways, and so back before nine and so to bed.



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Thursday, September 19th, 1940

Last night at sundown, while the twilight still lingered on in the sky, the roosters began crowing up and down Cane River. Aunt Cammie said that according to the darkies, this means rain on the morrow.

But the dawn opened as beautiful and serene as all the rest during the past couple of weeks.

I was in the big road before seven, walking for a few miles and riding for several more. On the out-skirts of Atchitoches on my way home, Harold Chevalier, a mulatto from Cane River now living in town, came along in his old Ford. He said he was going as far as Cypress, and would be glad if I would care to ride that far with him. As it cut ten or twelve miles from a journey on foot, I accepted, anticipating the remaining five mile walk between Cypress and Melrose with relish. But on reaching Cypress, Monsieur Chevalier thought he would like to go a little further, at least as far as Montrose, and so, of course, he ended up by taking me all the way to Melrose.

For the balance of the morning, Aunt Cammie and I worked together, as we did after dinner until a little after three. At that hour, Aunt Cammie returned to her weaving and I started out for a turn in the cotton fields that stretch off to the north beyond the banana and bamboo hedge which forms the great green screen at the far end of the white garden.

About half way down the turn row, surrounded on all sides as far as the eye could see by a vast sea of green and white cotton plants, I stopped to chat with an old darkie, with a crop of white whiskers, who was moving along briskly from plant to plant as he swept the fluffy white bolls into his long canvas sack. The sun was shining brightly and only at the horizon were there clouds of cotton boll design and lightness. At that moment, to our surprise, drops of rain suddenly descended from the blue.

The old man laughed and said he was afraid that wouldn't cool things off much, and with a few deft movements stripped a couple of more plants of their burden. But he had been mistaken, for the first few drops were followed by a downpour, which drenched us both, and greatly to our amazement since the sun continued to shine as before and looking above neither of us could see anything but blue sky. I reckon last night's roosters had proclaimed a shower and with or without clouds, the Heavens had to effect a seal of actuality to their prediction.

It continued to rain from the blue for possible five minutes, soaking the cotton and people alike. Thoroughly drenched I plodded home through the mud, and so fell into a bath and fresh clothes.

Supper at 5:30 and reading from Pydnor until 7:15 when we said goodnight and I retired before 7:30.

But before closing today's Journal, I must record

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something I heard that goes along the same road of which I have been thinking since the Draft Law went into effect two or three days ago.

With the incorporation of this legislation as a part of our new departure in the defense of Democratic Government, I have wondered what effects will develop as mulattoes at 21 are, year after year, taken into military training, and thus removed far from their Cane River locale.

In many instances, I suppose, they will live for this twelfth month in regions far different from this part of Louisiana, and in some cases in neighborhoods where the relationship between the mulatto and the white, and the mulatto and the negro will be on quite a different footing from that which obtains here. And after they return to their firesides on Cane River, I am wondering how this experience will alter their view point.

Today a mulatto told me this story which took place last May when the Army manoeuvres were held in this part of the South during which time soldiers from Ohio, Wisconsin and other Northern states were billeted near Melrose.

One day during that time, some of these soldiers were drinking beer in the saloon, as were several mulattoes from Melrose. The Melrose overseer came in the saloon, ordered a drink, and exchanged conversation with the soldiers who spoke to him about various aspects of labor on a plantation. The overseer pointed out that on Melrose they used nigger labor.

The soldiers, noting the mulattoes present, replied to the overseer that in the North whence they came, if the overseer were to refer to the colored people as niggers within earshot of the latter, they would beat him up good. The overseer thereupon left the saloon and henceforth held no conversations with the soldiers during their manoeuvres on Cane River.

The mulatto rather relished the episode. I wonder what other ones they will have on hand when their days of military training in other sections of the country have been completed.



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Friday, September 20th, 1940.

Yesterda's great puffs of fleecy cotton clouds have smoothed out into a thin layer-like haze, completely enshrouding the great arch of Heaven, and difusing the light of day so perfectly as to make the light filter through with equal intensiy from all points of the compass.

The out-going mail was fairly heavy, as usual, and the in-coming was rather light. Aunt Cammie and I had our mid-morning coffee together and did our stint on Mr. Wailes. We also made a round of the formal grass plots before and behind the African House. This parterre appears at especial advantage at the moment. The outer boarder in the great elipses which stretch far to the North and to the South of the building, is heavily out-oined by a shaggy growth of Pirate's Beard, while immediately within this endless line of demarkation run a continuous row of little rain lilies, some six inche high, and looking ever so much like full-blown crocuses.

Further winin this edging runs a double row, about a foot from each elliptical line, an astonishing parade inx, two abreast, of foot high Resurrection lilies, just off Cranberry in color and almost pagan in their nakedness. For Resurrection or Gurensey lilies sent up a shoot direct from the grown with no leaves to shurround or to shade it. Looking faintly like an asparagus, the shoot tentines to mount upward until reaching a 12 inch height, expands it head in a glory of blossom, like a day-time version of Bengal light, to enhance to set off to further advantage the strange architectural features of the African House rising from the en-circling grass plots.

After dinner, we continued our labors until three when visitor s called Aunt Cammie to the big house, and I had my lemonade alone in my house. In serving me, Frank told me an amusing coincidence regardin ght birth of his youngest child. Frank Morin, and his cousin, Frank Morin, had married sisters. Both sisters became expectant mothers about the same time, although it appeared that "Cousin" Frank's wife would have her child first. This in truth, did happen, and on the day the child was born, her sister traveled a couple of miles down the road by car to call on her,--and made this visit in spite of her husband's admonition that their child, too, must be just in the offing, so to speak. But the good woman was determined to see her sister, and go she would, only to discover immed ately upon her arrival, that she herself was about to receive a visitation from Old Man Storck. There was a bed in the room beside's the one which "Cousin" Frank's wife was occupying, and of course the mid-wife who ushered in the first child, was present "to catch" the second. And so Both Frank's wives, who were sisters, gave birth to a boy each on the same day in the same house, which seems odd to me.

At three I walked over to Zelines, but failed to find her either at home or in the customary cotton patch at the end of the lane leading to the Bayou. On my way home along the dusty road, I was greeted by ol M. Madelin with home I talked for half an hour, and so home to supper, to reading afterward and so to bed before 7:30.

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Saturday, Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>, 1940.

Today's patter ofactivities, weather, timing and turning in are almost identical.

The sky was a canopy of gray, making the green of the cotton fields a little deeper and the cotton bolls a little whiter.

Our labors were much along the lines of yesterday, too,--with draperies substituting for Aunt Cammie's reading, for today she finished the slip covers of white Osnaberg for the new chair and sofa, and completed the yards and yars of Pacific Duck draperies whic whn drawn will make an extra division in my maisonette, creating a separate room out of that section of the larger one, so that everything below the balcony,--sofa, fireplace, bed, etc., will be all by itself, more roomy than an alcove and more intimate than a livingroom, bedroom and boudoir all rolled into one.

In the afternoon, Aunt Cammie had guests, people from town with relatives from Boston who told Aunt Cammie much about Louisiana politics and personalities

For myself, I took to the big road with their arrival, and ran through cluds of dust ~~xxxx~~ thrown up by automobiles, as I tramped the route from elrose around by the river to Zelines. I found the house closed, on my arrival, but a pretty mulatress girl, called to me from next door, saying that Zeline and Joe were in the cotton patch hard by the pumpkin patch and there I found them, just starting for home, each with a huge pack over their should ers.

I didn't stay long, only to watch them weigh what they had picked, and so to accompany them to the house, and chat for a moment or two, before starting on my r turn home. Joe told me that he had to ride over to elrose on his horse to get coal oil, kerosene, and that if I went out by the front gate, he would see me as he mounte ted his horse and rode out the side. On reaching the river road, I walked along toward the bridge, thinking Joe would be overtaking me shortly, but I had gone quite a ways without hearing his horses ho hoofs behind. I walked a little further, and then turning around, saw poor Joe headed in my direction, laraping his pony for all he was worth, somehow jumping up and down on the saddle with every bounce of the horse, his coat flopping in the breeze and his coal-oil jug bouncing antiphonally with his own figure. Somehow he made me think of a ~~xxxx~~ slightly discolored and emaciated Sancho Panza.

He was puffing and out of breath when he came along side me, explaining that he was almost worn out in his efforts to make his hore move faster than a slow walk, and that he reckoned he would never catch up with me unless he could persuade the nag to run a little. But she hadn't galloped in so long, he guessed she had forgotten how, and so he, in having forgotten how to ride, had jolted along in a manner that he feared might lead to the death of both horse and rider

By this time we were at the saloon at just the time that moment comes in the afternoon when a pause refreshes, and thus fortified we continued our journey across the bridge and so on to elrose. Supper and six, reading in part and hence to bed.



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Sunday, Sept. 22nd, 1940.

The weather remains perfect, in spite of the storms of the Equinox which the calendar says should be upon us.

It was a quiet day, for a change, this Sunday at "elrose.

No one called, not even the family, and the consequent quiet was restful and invigorating.

Aunt Cammie and I worked for a while both before and after dinner without an interruption,--a rarity that is remarkable.

About four, I took a little turn along Cane River. I turned left at the bridge, instead of the customary right, passing by McKinley's house. He was leaning on his front gate, chatting with Felix, the barber, his next door neighbor.

McKinley laughingly remarked that I hadn't come over to have water melon with him, and that now all the water melons were gone. He said he hoped to get a job cooking in the training camp which is scheduled to be built near Alexandria, as Army Training unit of Fort Beauregard. . . Poor McKinley,--in a way it ought to be a Paradise for him, but I reckon his personality is not one designed for the military.

Father Hicksley came by in his car. He stopped and asked us what we were talking about. I felt like telling him it was none of his business, but instead lied by saying we were settling the cotton question for 1940. He said he was making out all right in his new Parish near Spanish Lake. He can get bogged in it for all I care. He halted but a moment and drove on in a cloud of dust.

I continued my walk, in a little cloud of dust of my own making for the ground is so dry, the dust arises with each footfall.

Following around the margin of the River, I passed Leon "ettoyer's house. His mama called a greeting to me. Somehow she always reminds me of a French mulatto edition of Florence Kling Harding, 20 years before she struck the White House,--quite out of joint with her setting and geared too high for preening her plumage to go well with any fine feathers she may ever graft on herself.

Around by Nathaniel Broux's, across the over-burdened cotton patch, and so back home again before five o'clock.

Supper a little after five, and reading after that until seven when we said good night, and within ten minutes I was asleep in bed.

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Monday, September 23rd, 1940.

I had thought of taking a walk this morning, but it is as well that I didn't for it began raining a little after eight, and kept going all day long. . . The radio says 3.84 inches of water fell, making, I suppose about 220 tons to the acres, but as I don't know how much a ton of water spread over an acre would look like, I surely haven't the vaguest notion of a dash to the tune of 220 tons would be. But one of thing I am certain,--it's a lot of water.

With the coming of the rain, the new perfumes which have appeared in fresh blooming flowers seemed doubly intensified. About my little house there are several sweet olives in full flower,--one on either side of the front steps, and others further along the gallery. Their fragrance is so heavy that it sags through the air, into the house and out on the gallery and along the lawn for a goodly distance. I wish obina were here instead of in New Mexico, for she would love it as much as I.

The cape jasmine by my back gallery is also in full bloom again, and the heavy air is saturated with its sweetness. I like these gardenias which make their bow in the Spring and then return for a curtesy in the turn of the summer.

Aunt Cammie thought the storm, reportedly sweeping up from the gulf might reach "elrose during the night and wreck the 12 foot dahlias which are now in their full glory. I volunteered to gather some from the upper reaches of the various bushes. Two huge bouquets feel beneath my snipping shears, with a little colored boy to catch them as they fell. Like liquids frozen into facets of luminous pastels they spill over the tops of the great white vases on my mantle and from the early American glass vase on my desk. Hundreds more still grace the dahlias plants, and I reckon they'll weather the storm, if any.

We had supper at five, and reading until 7:30, when the day was done, and I retired.

I had intended to mention the story of a bunch of grapes in today's Journal, but I shall have to hold it for later inclusion.



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2 Tuesday, Sept. 24th, 1940.

I guess the storm from the Gulf must have changed its mind alright and started back in the direction of its origin, for the sky seems rent with patches of blue through the tattered gray veils which linger on in the sky, but obviously the sun will break through.

The roads, however, are still a little soggy, and I shall not take a walk until tomorrow. Coffee came as usual at ten, and with it the mail and Aunt Cammie to spend the balance of the morning with me.

The mail included a letter in ~~ink~~ longhand from Magruder Drake, posted from Selma, which is the post office on the plantation of the original Brandon domaine just outside Washington, Miss. In his letter, he advised me that he had just been speaking with Mr. and Mrs. Ward regarding my interest in the Nutt and Hunt families, and that Mrs. Ward, nee Marshall, and grand daughter of David Hunt, told him that in their home,--Landsdown,--tucked away in the woods beyond the bayou, and opposite the former Homewood, she had an assortment of "Hunt papers which she would be glad to let me go over. Mr. Ward, on the other hand, is the grandson of Dr. Haller Nutt, the great cotton planter and builder of Longwood, and Mr. Drake understood that he might be able to secure the Haller Nutt papers and Diary for me if I were to see ~~th~~ him. I accordingly jotted down a note to Magruder, suggesting that I might be in Natchez within a week or ten days, and that I would appreciate his good offices in kicking down the red carpet for me at Landsdown.

Aunt Cammie arose to the occasion with the suggestion that I write Mary Ambain, suggesting that I come over to "atchez for a few days, to ride back to "elrose with her when she comes to do her initial work on her new loom, and remarking that I might return to "atchez with her for a few days, and that Aunt Cammie might follow with Fugabou, and so take a turn with me and Nellie Wailes Brandon about the traces, and so return to "elrose,--we three. I liked the whole thing.

After dinner we worked until three when I started for Zeline's, but found the roads a little soupy. Sydney Lacaze, the Police Juror, as they seem to call the Road Supervisors in this region, came along before I had reached the bridge, where he had men putting in new plank. He stopped for me to ride a couple of hundred yards with him, and I accepted. I was glad, also, of the opportunity to buy him a beer, he has always been so generous in stopping to pick me up as he sails up and down the big road in all kinds of weather.

I then started up towards Zeline's but found the river road too antediluvian for me, so turned back. On the saloon gallery I listened to the mulattoes chattering,--for the rain had spoiled the cotton picking on Monday, and today was still too wet to work at it.

Every once in a while they hit off an expression which is

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pat, it seems to me. Only a day before I had heard the same expression as was used there on the gallery. Someone was speaking of another mulatto who has the reputation for being an expert axeman. They said: "He sure knowed how to handle an axe, like a monkey knowed how to handle a coconut."

Surely the saloon is the poor man's club of Cane River. "Heaven alone knows where they get their money, but when there is no work they all love to sit and gamble, playing Twenty-One, day in and day out. They always have a fringe of on-lookers, too,--and in that circle, I notice Joe "hevalier, Terrance Madelin,--a little over-seas, Edward Antee, Puny's boy, Jake and a dozen or so more, representing a goodly sprinkling of Mettoyars Couties, Jones, Balthazars, etc.

In the back room there were two other tables going full tilt. The overseer came in for a drink at the White "ntrance, and I heard a veiled exaggeration of respect for him,--so phrased as to be utterly proper and yet so ~~p~~ enunciated as to be dripping with vitriol. I also heard them mention another white person, as the only one of two people who had ever been on Cane River whose attitude toward the people of color was something different from the usual brand of relationship which suggested that of a white man for his dog, even though he may have been fond of the animal. Interesting,--these poor man's clubs.

Hom for supper, and further reading from "ydnor until 7:30.

Asleep by ten, or at least going through the motions, although I heard the clock strike all the hours except 2. I thought much on divers things, including the faithful qualities of so many branches of the canine group.



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Wednesday, Sept. 25th, 1940.

I was a little tired and sleepy when Frank arrived a little before six with my coffee. We chatted for half an hour, where upon I dashed through a quick shower, and got into the big road, after dashing off a line or two for the postman. I grabbed off a biscuit on my way through the big house about 6:45, for Mary hadn't arrived as yet, and I didn't want to wait for Frank to fix my tray.

I posted a letter for Mary Lambdin, regarding a proposed flight into Mississippi, and so headed down the big road. At Montrose I found Edward, all newly dressed in oyster gray and white. He said he was going to town to see a Dr., as both his sides pained him and he reckoned he might have appendicitis. We journey along the highway more or less together.

In town, we said goodbye, and exchanged the idea that we both might see each other on the road back home perhaps an hour later.

I took a hurried turn through the shops, looking for stationary and folders which I didn't find,--made one call--and was out on the cement highway beyond the bridge approach to town before nine. Edward came along shortly afterward, seemingly much better,--possibly due to the perscription he had had filled. The Dr. told him that his pains weren't from appendicitis but merely from a strain.

One of the "ambre boys" came along in a station wagon shortly, stopping for us. We had thought of waiting for Bill Jones who was in town, but gave up the idea at the other invitation, as the sky had grown cloudy,--long endless furrows from horizon to horizon, and precipitation seemed likely at any moment.

We stopped a couple of times on the way down, at the Friedman's and at the "ambre store in Bermuda, and hence we speeded along La Cote Joyeuse to Melrose. I was interested in what the Lambre boy said as we drove along that latter 7 mile stretch of road. About a mile or two below the Bermuda bridge he remarked that at about this distance between Bermuda and Melrose, he always felt as though he passed over a line of demarkation, in what seemed to be the parallel which separated the Bermuda section, dominated by negroes, numerically, and Melrose which, of course, has a great preponderance of mulattoes.

Perhaps this is purely imaginative on his part, but I understood him perfectly, since I have experienced something of the same sort in driving from Woodville, Miss., to St. Francisville, La., where, along this route, south of the old Jefferson Davis plantation home, I always feel as though I am passing between a "sanity belt", as it seems to cut across the fairy kingdom of Natchez to the North and West Feliciana to the South. It was interesting to me, too, that the Lambre boy should have preferred the Melrose tempo, which does seem more civilized than the Bermuda which seems more pronounced in its racial coloring and disposition. Possibly the Melrose mulattoes represent, in their coloring, at least, the old Greek concept of moderation in everything, and I must say I have often felt they must be rather satisfied in one respect,--that they are neither so jet as the negroes nor so washed out as whites seem to be after one has long been accustomed to mulato.

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Back to Melrose by 10:30, I said good bye to Edward, chatted for a few moments on the store gallery with Celeste, and so, with the mail under my arm, went over to the big house to chat with Aunt Cammie for half an hour, run through the mail and bemoan the failure of the British - de Gaulle attempt to capture Dakar, since the failure of the effort will most certainly lower world prestige which is much too far below par at present, and will most surely bring more of the French Empire under the Nazi domination,--if indeed, it all isn't under it already.

And extra guest or two for dinner, and afterwards Aunt Cammie and I concluded our labors on the Wailes Diary. By now the clouds had darkened although there seemed less likelihood of rain, although a mounting wind blew cold from the North. I took a turn to the far side of the bridge and back, and so set about doing some work on my typewriter until nearly five. Sam Brown appeared just as I was finishing, with a wheelbarrow of wood for the kitchen stove and to stir. Tonight there will be fires in more places than usual I reckon.

Supper at 5:15, and it was chilly in the summer dining room where the chilly breeze swept through like a gale. But with the setting of the sun, a rift appeared in the clouds banks in the west, and a cold silver light shot through the crevasses and seemed to galvanize the foliage in a horizontal flood of cold light.

We read until after seven and shivered, too, for Aunt Cammie, warm blooded and "partan, hadn't had a fire laid in the Franklin stove and contented herself with a warm woolen white shawl.

Outside the thermometer must have dropped to about 40 degrees. and with the coming of night, all the clouds had rolled away, making my tourney through the gardens easy enough by following the black pattern of the great branches of the trees against the glittering gray-blue of the heavens.

I closed myself up securely at 4yles, lighted the big logs that had been laid down in my fireplace, and so reveled in that luxurious feeling of inner comfort and contentedness as opposed to the chilling world outside. I had looked forward to this hour with anticipation and in the realization of it, I found it equally good. Eight, nine, ten eleven, and so to sleep.

mcj



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Thursday, Sept. 26th, 1940.

I shall never cease to marvel at the completeness to which a child gives himself up at the close of day, now the satisfaction of having slept well in manhood after physical exertion. I slept like that last night.

It was nearly six when I awoke, pleasantly exhausted and not unmindful of what Sam Brown had said regarding the need everybody would have for "kivvers" last night, for it was a little too chilly for this season in this climate,--in the 40's I reckon.

All the rains and cloud banks have lifted and only blue sky and sunshine remain, with the air still keen and effervescing with ozone.

But there was another element in the atmosphere which somehow permeated through all the levees built to stem the tide. Perhaps the darkies express it best by saying that on certain days it sure 'nough looks like the Devil passes round.

The feud, as between Henry and Frank, still smolders, and Henry, anxious to finish a loom on which he is working, had to do things at the gin for J. H., which got things further out of joint. There was something about the mail, too, both as it was sent out and as it came in, that was just enough off key to suggest an echo of discord. Nothing seemed exactly wrong but on the other hand everything seemed just off center. Those are curious times, which everyone has experienced, I suppose, although to say I sat in as an observer rather than as an actor in the piece, and even that was a little disturbing. I think the darkies summed it up best in saying that some days the Devil passes 'round.

Aunt Cammie and I ran through some things together in the morning, and after dinner she finished the piece of rami in the loom which when removed from the frame, opens up double the width it appears to have when being woven. I took a walk along the river road as far as "adame Aubin-Rocques. Percy Brunson stopped in his car to give me a lift. He said he was catching cold, since he wasn't able to adjust his clothes to the changeable weather. He is something of a riot. Next Monday, he said, he expects his school to start in Bermuda,--the colored schools starting later than the white schools, of course, for I believe the white schools have been in session since Labor Day, I think.

Back home before five, and shortly afterward we had supper. Dan had talked with Governor Jones Secretary, Frank Whitehead in the afternoon, and plans to go to Baton Rouge tomorrow to select a job. I thought he might want to talk with Aunt Cammie in the evening, and so I withdrew a little after six, taking a walk for an hour along the river, and so to bed by 7:30.

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Friday, September 27th, 1940.

It's still cool but resplendant.

I had my mail out of the way by nine, after a prolonged breakfast, and so to the store, and on to the gin to watch the wheels go round and the bales come tumbling out.

On the way back, I met Celeste, just returning from an early morning ride, her saddle under her arm. She asked me to drop by the house to have coffee with her and her mother, M. She also wanted to read me something from yesterday's Times Picayune in the column entitled Man About Manhattan. It had to with the writer's current visit to Porto Rico, where he said one American known to all the island people was Abraham Feldstein, affectionately called Abe by all the islanders, except Christian Belle, the French Consul, who called him Abbe,--which does sound like Mr. Belle in thus making a cleric out of a Feldstein.

Back to the big house, I had coffee again with Aunt Cammie this time, and so we ran through the mail, with little of interest in it, although we were united in glancing over the pictures in the paper showing the opening of the Mississippi Bridge at Natchez.

Dan having gone to Baton Rouge, the table was reduced by one at dinner, and afterward I worked at my desk until coffee time when Aunt Cammie came to spend a few minutes with me and run over some Mississippi notes and photostats on the Prince of Jallon.

Later she had guests from town, the Levys, while about four I took a turn to Cane River bridge and back.

After supper we looked over death notices which the Levys had brought for her. These announcements dated back over a long span of years, and were the printed announcements of prominent persons' deaths, mailed at the time of the decease to public bill boards and posts announcing the death and inviting the friends to attend the funeral services. Frequently a little illustration set off the leaflet,--usually a black horse and driver with a hearse, or sometimes a woman in black weeping at a tomb. They are about six inches square, I should guess, and have been used since early ante-bellum days to the present.

We read, too, from a new book,--Class Struggle in Louisiana, which seemed to be a scholarly study in part of the plantation holdings as opposed to farm holdings in the State. Aunt Cammie skipped the pages given over to statistics, saying she was jumping through the book like a kangaroo through a cane brake.

The enumeration of acreages in the volume set us to talking about Melrose acreage and the 900 acre plantation of J. H.'s in Cogniac, 6 or 7 miles from here, north and on Red River, we



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Friday.

~~Thursday~~

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We also spoke of Masseline who lives up there and Gabriel and others.

We said goodnight at eith, and with Grandpa at my heels I retired to Lyle's. It was good to find the blind fire which Frank had laid for me. In a couple of minutes the logs were blazing and I was enjoying the drinks which Aunt Cammie had sent along for me.

Nine ten, elev, and the fire had burned low, and I was in bed asleep.

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Saturday, September 28th, 1940.

In the weather, perfection remains the order of the day.

In view of the evening, and the coolness that comes with sun down, I slept well, awakening only when Frank arrived a little before six o'clock.

He spoke of making a fire but I thought it scarcely necessary, in spite of the thermometer in the 40's. But Frank said he might as well get primed for the Winter season, and accordingly had a good blaze going in a jiffy.

I listened to the newsbroadcasts from Berlin and Dondon. It was ~~xxxx~~ interesting that both broadcasts devoted a large part of their time to a detailed account of the reaction the animals in the zoos in both the German and British capitols during the night air raids. In both cities, it was said, the animals, as befitted their rank as king of the beasts, the lions seemed the most calm and indifferent to the explosion of bombs and the fire of the anti air craft guns. The pigeons seemed the most up-set, many of them dying apparantly from fright, with a possibility that the parent pigeons kill their off-spring to save them from the terror loosed about them. The monkeys, it is said, exhibit the greatest nervous reaction, chattering and screaming both during the raids and for hours afterward. The alligators and crocodilles, too, add their roars to the monkeys bedlam. As for the reptiles, they seem to register no visible signs of consciousness that anything unusual is in the air, "snakes being deaf," as the broadcasters explained. I wonder, however, if the detonations do not somehow register on them too, even though there may be slight reaction. The bears, they say, make a great racket, too, although the rabbits seem to sleep through these nights of terror without any sign of considering the impending possibilities.

Both before and after dinner, Aunt Cammie and I worked on biographical sketch of various characters appearing in the Wailes Diary. We devoted our time primarily to the Reverend Philson, who had preached once in Washington, Miss., before the Confederate War. In later years he had preached at the Leonidas Pope Episcopal Church in Thibidoux, La., and Aunt Cammie had known his daughter at that time, and it was from her letter, written to Aunt Cammie in July 1940, that we gathered much of the data for this biographical ~~sk~~ sketch.

This woman's name is Mrs. Williamson, nee Philson, of course. It seems that Mr. Williamson, years ago, had fallen in love with one of the Philson girls, but that a sister had somehow taken her sister beau away from her and married him. The Williamsons had several children,--possibly four,--at least a pair of twin girls, a boy and another girl. Mr. Williamson was frequently insane, and once between times while at home from the Asylum, killed one of the twins and I believe another daughter,--there must have been more than four children,--for today, Mrs. Williamson, whose husband has subsequently died, has one daughter living in New Orleans,--the surviving twin, who is a lawyer, and Mrs. Williamson herself



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Saturday, Sept. 29th, 1940.

lives in Shreveport with her son, whom Aunt Cammie says is not like other men, being something of a sissy, although he works hard as a book keeper, and supports his mother. Poor branches from the Philson tree.

After three, with the help of one of the little colored boys, I took measurements of the fan light in my house, in preparation for putting it in a subdued light to harmonize the better with the stained glass efflow it. Afterward I visited the gin, talked about the machinery and its operation with Puny, and talked cotton generally with J. H., and thence took a walk to Cane River and back before supper.

Afterwards Aunt Cammie and I read in the same volume we had skimmed through the night before.

Before sitting down, however, Aunt Cammie had somehow run a sliver under her fingernail, and we accordingly made a round of the pantry to cut off some salt meat, and so bandaged up the finger in hopes that it might draw out the sliver which Aunt Cammie couldn't feel well enough to extract with a needle.

At 8 o'clock we said goodnight, and a little afterward I was asleep at Lyle's.

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Sunday, September 29th, 1940

Cloudless sky and faultless temperature.

In the morning, Aunt Cammie and I worked for a while on biographical material concerning J. F. A. Claiborne, as appeared in this week's Natchez Democrat, in an article by Zeda Wells. It is good material she presented, but like most Natchez material, it is so rich in its ramifications that it has to be broken down and expanded to make it comprehensible to the average reader.

Zeda Wells is a remarkable person. Years before the Pilgrimage business started, and when Natchez was still 40 miles from the nearest paved road, Zeda Wells was guiding pilgrims who unsuspectingly strayed into this Eldorado of History and Architecture. Zaida Wells was a town character in a town full of them. She dressed slovenly, she was devoid of social graces, she swore like a pirate, she kenneled with scores of stray dogs, she had taken under her wing, altogether she was about as unprepossessing as a Natchez citizen could be, and yet she knew everybody, and everybody honored her notes when pilgrims presented them at the portals of the mansions. It was never clear to me if through kinship, Zaida was allied to everyone in town who mattered, or if Zaida was so well informed about everyone's family skeleton that it seemed best to give her requests consideration.

One thing no one could deny, Zaida Wells knew her Natchez history, and her articles appearing in Mississippi Valley newspapers stood for something. Aunt Cammie had known her through these, and had, on inquiring for a guide a number of years ago, been directed to Zaid Wells, whom it was said knew everything.

It wasn't so long ago that Zaida was arrested in Natchez for using vile language on the street, but I reckon it didn't take Zaida long to put the Judge in his place. Zaid was like that. I must make it a point to have a round with her before long.

Frances came in before Aunt Cammie and I had progressed very far, and as Frances is to work in the Louisiana Room of the Natchitoches Normal, Eugene Watson, the head of the library, had told Frances to consult her mother-in-law on clipping, etc., for the library, since Aunt Cammie's scrapbook on this sort of material is considered the finest in the country,--running as good as through, chunsaesspwbunehitidawidndatwiah sets sources, etc., etc.

But after Frances came other Sunday members of the family, and our work for the day was finished.

After dinner, I walked along a Cote Joyeuse, stopping



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Frenchy's,--a little road side stand, with out-buildings, including a small dance hall, tourist cabins, etc.

Frenchy recognized me, although I had never seen him so far as I could remember, and he offered me the old fashioned rocking chair in which he was sitting, taking a modern striagh back chair for himself.

We talked about Cane River and its marvelous fishing opportunities,--lots of his customers being fishermen,--and he took me to his kitchen to see the fine catch he had brought in this morning. They constituted half a dozen bass, about a foot and a half long. Before I left, he gave them to some luckless fishermen who had been fishing since Saturday afternoon, and had had no success whatsoever. Being a born fisherman, he merely dropys his line in the water, and the fish seem to leap into his boat. I saw him through a line in the River at the "elrose bridge,--2 or 3 miles below his place, on Thursday, and he pulled out six or eight fish in about as many minutes while fisher folk, ~~xxxxxx~~ who had been angling there for half the day, looked on with envy and astonsihment.

He told me that the deer season would be open before long, and he would go over to the swamps around Jonesville, which we pass on our way to Natchez. There he says he goes hunting quite often,--and that the game covers almost everything from squirrels through deer, with plenty of huge alligators through in.

He is a good hearted little fellow,--this Frency,--seeming kindly disposed toward the world at large, and enjoying the admiration of the negroes and mulattoes, as well as his white fisher folk who dirve here from all around,--as far as Texas,--so far has his reputation for angling traveled, so that the waters from which he fishes seem to spread in fame, too.

Back down the Bermuda road, I noticed the caterpillars had stipped most of the fields of the leaves from the cotton plants, leaving nothing but the stalks and the white cotton bolls flecking the endless fields like the first great snow flakes on a wintry day,--and making them more striking in this setting of hot sunshine and surrounding seas of foliage.

After supper, and the family members had departed, Aunt Cammie and I sat until almost eight, reading from a curious volume by Lorenzo and Peggy Dow,--a couple of religious fanatics who roamed the country,--particularly New England and the Middle Atlantic Coastal States during the early 1800's, although they did make a couple of flyers into "the Mississippi", as they termed that territory, in 1804 and subsequently. The account of prissy Peggy's trip down the Mississippi on a flat boat with unknown boat men,--all of them occupying the small living quarters for the 6 weeks trip, while her husband, Lorenzo was making the trip overland, was something exceptional, although dumbly recounted.

They lived at "ashington, Miss., for a while, I must investigate. We waid good igit at eight and so to bed.

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Monday, September 30th, 1940.

Perf ction prevails in the weather.

Up at dawn, and into the big road before sun up. I traveled miles on foot, along Cane River,--ever a magic mirror of Fragonard banks at this time of the morning,. Before seven I had encountered a couple of straying mulattoes, driving ~~xxxx~~ hard toward Bayou Verbanne,. Of course they both knew me although I am sure I had never seen either of them before. They were kind enough to stop their fine car, and transport me along the Montrose Road as far as the cement highway, where I got down.

And thence to town, and so back toward home, only to encounter Dan who hailed me from his car, asking me to go back to town with him for a couple of odd bits of shopping before leaving for his new job in Baton Rouge this afternoon.

We were back home before ten, and so Aunt Cammie and I had mail together, and ran through the mail which was not extensive, although excellent in quality. We chatted over plans for Natchez and I decided I would leave on Wednesday, stay with Mary Lambdin until Monday, return to "elrose with her,--possibly a week from today and after her visit here of three or four days, return to Natchez with her again, with the assurance that Aunt Cammie would drive over later to pick me up. It sounds like a nice arrangement, although there are lots of little things here which will have to be put in order before all this globe trotting is taken care of. Then too, there is the oh nce that friends may come unexpectedly,--Washington, and Porto Rico,--and if they do,--without advance warning, I shall have to re-adjust the calendar.

After dinner I got out a batch of correspondence before coffee time, when Aunt Cammie came over to sit for a little while, and work with me on the biographical sketches we are adding to our copies of P. D. C. Wailles Diary.

Three o'clock and I walked down to the bridge and back, and so to a shower before supper, and thence to a couple of hours of reading, continuing the hectic account of Lorenzo and Peggy Dow's travels and "miseres", and so from that doelful recital to Baton Rouge papers, recounting the purchase of Belle Grove,--the Pink House, by the Michigan landscape architects, who express the hope of restoring the place, now that they have purchased it. There is only one restraining feature about their enthusiasms, they haven't any money,--and it would probably cost several hundred thousand dollars to put this huge 75 room house back in order.

At eight we said good night,--and eventually I slept after having a coaca-cola, and working for a time at my machine.

WAE



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Tuesday, October 2nd, 1940.

The weather continues as glorious as ever.

It was good to take a long walk before breakfast, and so rip out a batch of mail before 8:30, when with the incoming mail, Aunt Cammie came to have coffee with me, and to run through the letters together.

I also ran through a couple of packages which came at the same time, much to my surprise and enchantment.

There were guests in the in the morning, and after dinner there were more,--people who didn't register much on my mind, other than they came from afar, and thought, like everyone else, that all a plantation owner had to do was to park himself on his front gallery and spend his days and night drinking mint juleps while slaves tilled the soil.

\* After dinner I went over to Felix's house, for a haircut, but found only Pearl at home, for it seems that Felix had just gone to the Melrose gin with the last five of his bales of cotton to be ginned.

We chatted for an hour or so,--taking in everyone on Cane River in our gossip, and laughing quite a bit at me when I made the mistake

of telling a story about that inordinately tall Rocique boy, for it seemed the youth sitting on the gallery waiting also for Felix was the youth's brother.

I saw Gabriel today, and appreciated the compliment that comes with one walking 20 miles after strenuous toil to keep a promise. I don't know why I should feel complimented, but somehow I did.

After three o'clock coffee, Aunt Cammie busied herself with visiting grandchild, and I worked at my desk, until Joe Peace, came by to see me. School had opened Monday for the darkies, and he wanted to tell me about his new teacher, etc., etc.

We read in the evening after supper,--Aunt Cammie and I, and before eight o'clock said good night. I took a long hot bath at Lyle's house, and sat by the fireplace,--a good blaze going until later than I had realized. Life seemed good, and I wished I might be in two places,--Natchez and Melrose the balance of the week.

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October 2nd, 1940.

Wednesday.

The weather remains as perfect as all the yesterdays of the past couple of weeks.

With all the windows and doors open, and a good fire blazing on the hearth, the urge to be up and at my typewriter triumphed over my downy couch, and so a little after five o'clock, I had tossed off my mail and was consuming my breakfast with relish before seven o'clock.

I took a little turn around the gardens before going to the store with my mail, and afterwards visited the gin to chat with some of the darkies and watch the "white gold" come tumbling out of the press in big fat bales of cotton.

On the way back to the big house, I picked up the mail, and so joined Aunt Cammie for a stroll along the borders of Resurrection lilies and on to Lyle's where we had coffee and ran through the mail. Among the other pieces for me was a "colis de Trignon", which meant much more to me than I could express in the second letter of the same day which I wrote just before leaving Melrose.

After dinner, Frank helped me get into some clothes for traveling and handed me a good laugh when he glanced at me, after I had put on my hat,--which I seldom wear, when he remarked: "Gee, Mr. Francois, you certainly look funny with a hat on."

He had slipped a package in my bag which Aunt Cammie had sent over as a going-away gift, and after closing the zipper, took the bag to the car, while I stopped by the big house to say Aumevoir.

Celested took me to Montrose whence I took the bus to Alexandria, where I had a half hour wait for the Natchez bus. While in the station, I overheard the manager of the Interurban Lines speak to a bus driver regarding a dent in the mud guard of the bus he had been driving on his run of last evening. The driver when asked what he had run into responded with a straight face: "You see, Boss, I didn't run into nuthin. But as I was driving along a big old mule came up in the middle of the road right in front of me and stop, and I just drove up slowly to that old mule and pushed her, and she left that there dent".

Leaving Alexandria at 4 o'clock, we crossed Red River and after passing through Pineville, headed north east through the section where the several units of Camp Beauregard are being constructed for the training of the youths who will be registered this October 16th. There were vast armadas of trucks filled with all sorts of building material and hundreds of workmen to be seen on both sides of the road for a considerable distance. It is my understanding that the work is going along with dispatch, and to illustrate the speed with which things are being



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accomplished, a man told me of an experience a truck driver, delivering lumber, had the other day. In the morning he had brought a truck load of lumber to one of the four camp units, unloaded it, and departed,--only to discover after his dinner at noon, that he had unloaded the boards at the wrong camp. He accordingly drove back to the place, spoke with the director of the construction gang, explaining his mistake and saying that he would have to re-load the material and deliver it to the camp unit for which it was originally intended. The director of the unit was agreeable but smile at the futility of the man's wish, for with a wave of his hand, he said: "I would have no objection to your good intentions, but there stands your truck load of lumber in that finished house over there which was built since you were here this morning."

I gather it is this rate of speed which is brought into play when one proclaims an army is drafted and trained over night.

For a long ways along the highway from Alexandria to Trout, the road passes through Pine Woods, fragrant in this late afternoon coolness with the aromatic pungencies one always associates with pine woods. Just about a year ago, I had been traveling through the Pennsylvania Mountains at about the same hour of the day, and somehow the mood of that trip superimposed itself on me, thanks to the season, the hour and the faintly depressed state of my spirits, for I felt lonely, and was somehow consumed with a desire to be going towards rather than away from one I loved much. Loving, as I do, the Natchez country better than any other country on earth, I am always filled with pleasure at the thought of being there within a space of hours, and yet somehow the happiness of anticipation was somehow deadened by the drug of loneliness as I found myself forever turning toward

one individual who had been so constantly in my mind before leaving Melrose.

At Trout, we struck the main highway between Natchez and Natchitoches which I had known so well, and from that point on our progress seemed doubled, since a familiar road somehow always seems much shorter than an unfamiliar one. By dark we had reached Ferriday and by seven o'clock we were at Vidalia, and I was crossing the new bridge which spans the Mississippi at this point for the first time. The blackness of the river and the cliffs beyond, surmounted by their glittering chain of electric lights somehow reminded me of the view of Coney Island as view across the bay from Atlantic Highlands.

On re ching Natchez, I telephone Mary Lambdin, whom I had telephoned earlier in the day, but learned from Lou, her maid, that Jeff and Mary had gone to Memphis on Monday and wouldn't return until mid-night. I accordingly decided to stay in town, and telephoned Charles and Myrtie Bynne. Five minutes later I was chatting with them in their lovely home, Cherokee,--which they have restored with such superb and quiet elegance.

It had been several months since we had been alone to chat about old times and startling personalities of Natchez, and there was much ground to be covered. Being consumed with interest in old houses, Myrtie and I naturally turned to talking of Cherokee

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and its earlier owners, --Robert Dunbar, Michie,-- possibly spelled Mische, Elizabeth Greenfield Roche, Frederick Stanton, who lived here for 15 years before building Stanton Hall,--and many another neighbor of this distinguished old home.

It was from Myrtie that I first learned of "The Black Swan". She didn't know much about The Black Swann, and up to the moment the details are rather hazy in my mind, but The Black Swann was somebo y.

In fact the Black Swan was a negress, belonging to Elizabeth Greenfield when she lived in Natchez. The ~~xxx~~ records of Natchez have had considerable to say about Elizabeth Greenfield Roche and her gift of sixty-five thousand dollars to establish the famous Elizabeth Female Academy at Washington, Miss., for this is said to have been the first female academy ever registered in the United States. But little or nothing has been said about the servant of Elizabeth G. Roche. What has filtered down through the shadows of time is the faint echo of this slave's remarkable voice which was so beautiful that it became famous in this region in those remote ante-bellum days, and its possessor became known as The Black Swann. In compliment to this remarkable attribute Elizabeth Greefield manumitted this slave,--and so far as is known, it is the only instance of a slave having been freed because of her remarkable voice. Search has been made through various records to find the manumission papers, but up to the present time these haven't been located. There was a law in Mississippi forbidding the freeing of slaves, so there is little likelihood

the record would be found there. Many Mississippians, however, crossed to Louisiana to free their slaves, where no law forbade it, although the records there have thus far failed to reveal anything bearing on it. Mrs. Roche, according to the record, divorced her husband, sometime after the establishment of Elizabeth Female Academy, and lived for a while in Philadelphia or near there. It is possible that the record of the manumission may be found in that State's records.

But regardless of the time or place that this was carried out, the fact remains that Elizabeth Greenfield's slave had a remarkable voice, and that the girl became famous for her concerts, and that under the popular title of The Black Swan, she delighted the audience of distinguished Mississippi planters with the unique accomplishments with which Nature had endowed and blessed her. I must explore The Black Swan's course further.

After a couple of hours of highballs and much good conversation, we went out for a little supper, noticing, as we passed from the house to the car, the fine progress they are making on the restoration of Choctaw, the imposing old mansion across the street from Cherokee. We then drove around to the Sola Hotel, lingered long over our scrambled eggs, hot rolls and coffee, and so said goodnight.



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Thursday, Oct. 3rd, 1940 - page 1.

Another grand day,--but somehow one seems so removed from the elements on awakening in a hotel.

About seven thirty, I called Nellie Wailes Brandon, but learned from the servant that she hadn't awakened, and I accordingly telephoned Mrs. Moore, and found she had already had her breakfast, but would be enchanted to come over for a cup of coffee with me while I ate mine.

She arrived within a few minutes, and together we sat down to much talk, and I suppose some food, although the latter was certainly secondary,--there were so many points to cover.

She told me that she was doing some research work for Jeff. Davis Dixon, that ex-Paris sports promoter who is now employing the same methods on Natchez. Following his drum-beating and commercializing of The Devil's Punch Bowl, he is now engrossed in his development of White Apple Village, which I believe is already open. At the moment, Mrs. Moore is working on data concerning Fort Rosalie which Dixon is restoring in part.

Mrs. Moore wants me to ask him for the job of curator of the Fort, feeling that we would get along so nicely, since he is a Catholic, and she is under the impression that I am,--how I am not certain,--and because he is an uncouth, uneducated and uncultured person and I would probably fit in nicely with my type of personality to round out some of the polish he lacks. Curious reasoning, is all I can say.

His wife is supposed to have lots of money,--Matsbaum, or some such name. I believe they,--the wife's people, hail from Philadelphia. Someone said "they are a typical money-conscious bunch of Jews", but as I have never met them, I haven't had an opportunity to appraise their virtues to my own satisfaction.

We spoke of the Black Swan, and of a Mrs. Andrews in California, - a descendant of Elizabeth Greenfield, who is anxious

to purchase the old Greenfield plantation in Natchez. We spoke of several famous mulatto women of Natchez, too, but somehow the conversation rattled along so fast with so many flights from the subjects under discussion, that when we were done my head was swimming with dates, dumbbells and data that the whole thing was just a vast hodge-podge of helter-skelter brilliancies in historical unhatched eggs, none of which, so far as I am concerned, I fear, will ever be unscrambled.

Instantaneously, I accompanied Mrs. Moore part way to her home, and then returning to the hotel, telephoned Mary, who told me she would drive down immediately from Edgewood in Pine Ridge to pick me up. I then called Nellie Wailes Brandon, and ran out to North Rankin Street to chat with her for a few moments

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It was like old times, speaking with Mrs. Brandon, and somehow I felt a little closer to her since during the summer while she had been in Georgia and North Carolina, Aunt Cammie and I had become so intimately acquainted with her grandfather, B.L. C. Wailes, through the several years of his Diary.

She showed me the copy she had made of Hayes History of Natchez, --I believe that is the name,--of a very rare volume, which she had typed from an original with a view of giving it to Aunt Cammie for a Christmas present, to be presented this October. She said she was hoping to get over to Melrose about the middle of the month, and thought she could arrange to come when Aunt Cammie comes after me early week-after next, after Mary and I have returned to Melrose for a week and then come back here for a few days.

I then went over to Jeff's Office,--Service Coters, Inc., where Mary was waiting for me.

We drove down to the Natchez air port, next to which is the Co-operative Freezing plant where everyone in this locality stores all kinds of foods,--vegetables, fruits, meats, etc., to be drawn on as desired. As I understand it, fruits and vegetables are taken to this plant as they are gathered, and frozen instantly, as is chicken, beef, pork, etc., so that one may lay by an indefinite store as the seasons for each commodity rolls around, and thus draw on them throughout the year. It is my understanding that the temperature is maintained somewhere below 10 degrees under zero, and in consequence, the food can be stored there as long as desired.

We then drove out to Washington, and turning to the right just beyond the old Wailes home, we passed Dr. Monett's old home,--Sweet Auburn, now occupied, I believe, by some Wallace family, and thence down the Duck Pond Road, passed burned Sheriff's Retreat, once owned by Sheriff Baily of Adams County, and continuing along encountered a woman of some sixty years on a fine horse. She is a Baily, and extremely proud of her accomplishments as an equestrienne. We chatted for a few moments, and she wanted to show us the various gaits her horse could perform,--or, to be more exact,--how clever she was in making him perform,--and so she disappeared a half a mile or so down the tree canopied trace, returning at a canter,--swung around, and disappeared again, only to come back with a leaping, and so back out of sight again to come up at a "wreck?",--and so on and so forth through a hundred different paces of which I know nothing and cared ~~little~~ less.

I suppose she would still be preening her horse's feathers if we hadn't insisted that her accomplishments were amazing and that she would do well to enter the horsemanship again this year as she had last,--and with a hurried adieu, we sped on down the heavily shaded Duck Pond Road. Within a few miles, we came to a lovely old plantation house, some hundred yards back from the



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road. It was Trinity Plantation, and in the 1760's had been developed from the wilderness by the Robb family, with their nearest neighbors, the Clarks living across the bayou, and beyond whose property had been Colonel Osman's place, now the home of the Stanton girls, and famous as Historic Windy Hill.

The house at Trinity Plantation is built high from the ground,--a full storey of basement, with a flight of steps leading up to a gallery which runs the full length of the house. It is a single story gallery, and leads into a central hall with drawing rooms on either side. Mr. Cosgrove Hazlet (uncertain of spelling) greeted us,-- He is a very kindly man,--apparently does his own farming, is extremely poor and regretful that he is unable to keep his house in repair. On the gallery we met his wife, a kindly woman, through poverty wrung dry of many of the attributes which are due a plantation mistress, but withal a kindly person. She was embarrassed that we came to see her, I think,--realizing probably that Mary has such a fine home. But Mary is so kind that such feelings on the part of our hostess were quickly dispelled, and she told us almost immediately that her great hope in life was that sometime she might see it begin to rain and not have to worry about it coming down through the ceiling on her.

The house is fast falling into ruin,--the weather boarding looks seared by the sun, and it hasn't had a coat of paint on it for years,--in fact there is no evidence of any paint left from years long gone by. Inside they showed us some lovely old pieces of furniture,--a plain old desk, but a nice one, filled with old, old papers,--President Monroe's correspondence among others, and a fine old banquet table of poplar, so constructed of wide boards that only two widths were needed to construct the entire top of this fine old piece. Mrs. Hazlet had thought of cutting the table in two, for what reason I was uncertain, but we urged her to put off this sacrilege as long as she could.

Immediately behind the central hall, and the two drawing rooms, a great banquet hall ran the full length of the house, and great folding doors at either end enabled one to throw these open and continue the room into the two projecting wings. Up stairs there were several rooms, too,--lighted by dormers, but we were somewhat preoccupied for time, and thought we would come back another day to explore these.

Old Mr. Hazlet told me of the fine oil painting he had always kept over the fire place. It was a fine portrait of his ancestor, he said, and he loved it,--always hoping that he might be light him. But the years had come and gone, and how he himself was an old man, and in spite of his wish to keep the portrait in the house and have it pass to others as a part of it, he had consented to let a granddaughter over in Texas have it, as she was the only one of his family who had ever manifested the slightest interest in it. Besides, he felt that Trinity might burn some day, and he thought maybe that young girl might be able to house it better than he would. It was true that the plaster was off the ceilings in the house and that rain no doubt did drip through, so probably it was better to send the old portrait off into exile, even though, if portraits do have a soul, it might have preferred to perish with the house.

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And so we said good by to Mr. and Mrs. Hazlet, promising to come back one day, and continued our way down the Duck Pond Road which Mr. Hazlet had told me had been the first road from Hutchins Landing down on the Mississippi up through this territory and on to Vicksburg in the ante-revolutionary days.

Turning off to the left, we drove for some time until we came to another fine old home,--but fortunately in excellent condition,--Traveler's Rest. It had been built by the Hoggett's.

I understand that the plantation took its name from the fact that Covered Wagons, headed westward in the old days, used to stop near this place to camp and night. The Hoggetts, who built it were scandalously rich, and one of them later married Gerard

Brandon who with her dowry had built Brandon Hall, the fine old ante-bellum residence further down the Washington Road.

Traveler's Rest is exceptional in that it almost seems to be two houses built side by side with a glorified "dog-trott" connecting the two buildings, and which are united by a roof which continues from one room to the other, and the front gallery running across the front of both buildings, continues on the same level across the space between them. Semi Gothic arches support this roof and so gives a certain intimacy to the otherwise wide expanse of open gallery,--possibly some 20 feet wide between the two buildings.

I believe the family now occupying Traveler's Rest is named Montgomery or Hoggett, and are kin to Mary. Mary's mother had inherited one third of this three thousand acres place, but in the years following the Civil War, it had passed to others.

Inside the house the wood work is simple and elegant, with large rooms in both sections of the house, and one feature new to me. The great single doors leading from one room to another is so broken in several instances, as to enable one to fold the door in two. I believe this was done in order that in having the door open, it might not shut off the heat from nearby fireplaces which otherwise might have been somewhat screened with the great wide door were ajar.

Back of the house another gallery stretches the full length of the dual house, with a fine view commanding the upper second creek neighborhood for miles. A fine breeze swept through the glorified dog-trott, and only because dinner was awaiting us at Edgewood did we tear ourselves away.

And so back down the road, we passed Elizabeth Peabody Academy,--or the ruins of it,--and hence through Washington, and up the road by Foster's Mound, and hence on to Edgewood for dinner.

Dinner at Edgewood seems to have a special flavor,--the house is so beautiful, the service is so excellent, and the food so appetizing. We dined well, and afterward I sat on the side gallery for an hour or so, taking my siesta, and wakening only to breathe the heavily scented air of sweet olives which blew in on the languid breezes from the colonaded portico on the South side of the house.



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About three, Mary came down, and together we drove to Natchez to pick up her aunt, Miss Inez Montgomery, with whom we purposed a short exploration along the Hutchinson Landing Road.

Driving south along Homochita Street, we continued by the old Sir William Dunbar property,--the Forrest, Elgin, etc., and so along the Woodville highway and, passing by White Apple Village which that Dixon fellow has begun is ballyhoo to roll up more money and at the same time to give a commercial tinge of Money Island to this beautiful countryside. There is a big sign in front of the place, a new entrance gate and building for

souvenir selling, while on beyond one may see the Mounds of the Indians, red and blue poles sticking up from the tops of some of the mounds, and the usual clutter which accompanies a development carried out by a second rate P. T. Barnum. . We didn't stop.

At the Beverly Store, we turned West toward the River,--some four or five miles away, and wound up and up the old dirt Hutchin's Landing road. It is still remote. I hope it remains so. Along the beautiful traces, cuts in the walls on either side indicated private roads leading to plantations. I recall passing J. P. Butler's,--I believe he calls it Ormend. This is not to be confused with Pierce Butler's home,--Laurel Hill, formerly belonging to Dr. Mercer in ante-bellum days,--but J. P. Butler,--I think Pierces brother or cousin,--the one who was President of the Canal Bank in New Orleans when it crashed a few years ago, losing so many fortunes, including that of Miss Louise Butler of Saint Francisville. I gather the the President of the bank must have escaped from the crash better than some of his stockholders, since

he seems to enjoy the blessings of a fine plantation up here in the hill country of the lovely Natchez region.

We visited Buckhurst,--a lovely old place far back from the original Hutchins Landing road,--admiring its lovely old oaks, and regretting the disappearance of its old plantation house. We also drove off the main road and for a mile or two down a private road to Gaen Aubin,--the noble home of Colonel Anthony Hutchins who had built it here in the 1700's after he had received a huge grant from the British who controlled the region at that time.

It is a story and a half house, with an extremely wide gallery running across the entire front. The pillars are brick, but round and covered with plaster. There are three doors opening across the front gallery into the house, and two little steps leading up to each door from the floor of the gallery itself. The Central door leads to a hall which runs straight through the house. the other two doors,--protected,--in all three cases by stationary blinds, running to the floor, lead to drawing rooms.

Far from the days when this plantation embraced some thousands of acres, it is now reduced to some two hundred, with six colored families owning each a sixth of it, and all of the families, I believe, or a large part of them, living in this elegant, and ultra dignified old mansion.

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We chatted with a nice old Aunt Jemima for a time, admired the building, and then departed,--"bemoaning the departed pride and wreck of sweet Saint Cloud",--which Gaen Aubin most certainly is.

And so back to Natchez, where we called a few moments of old Mr. Alex. Postlethwait and his sister. He spoke of the old Chase property, Mantua, on the Kingston road, and how as a boy some 50 years ago he had visited there,--its beautiful gardens to the west of the house, covering several hundred acres of fenced property where luxuriant flowers grew, tended by faithful servants who kept the gravel walks spick and span and directed one to the slopes of the gardens which stepped gently down to the bayou in the distance, where wonderful mazelabyrinths extended further toward the Deer Park of which Miss Corinne had spoke to me last May.

But time was pressing, and supper would be waiting for us at Edgewood, and we accordingly ran along, dropping Miss "Nes" at her house in town, and so on out to Pine Ridge, supper and sleep.

Supplement to be added to the end of my Journal for Oct 4th, 1940.

For scandal, the latest I have heard concerns Mrs. Balfour Miller, the efficient Katherine Miller who is the moving spirit of the Pilgrimage Garden Club, as opposed to the Natchez Garden Club.

Years ago Katharin and Balfour became friends, after several years of marriage. One night, Katherine came home unexpectedly to surprise Balfour, after a long lecture trip in behalf of the Club.

After entering the house, however, she quickly flew out of the place, running to a filling station nearby to telephone her mother or her aunt or somebody to say that she simply wasn't going to stay at home anymore. It was disgusting, she added, for on her return she had found Balfour in bed,--in Katherine's own carved bed, with a negress,--and she simply wasn't going to stand him entertaining or being entertained by a nigger in her carved bed.



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I woke a little after six, and was really hungry when, Louis, instead of Leroy, arrived with my breakfast tray.

By eight I had done with the bacon and eggs, grits and crumpits and coffee, my shower and my shave, and was ready to drive to town with Mary, taking the boys along, to deposit them at their respective schools in Natchez.

It was another glorious day, and with a morning ahead of us, we headed down the Kingston road,--stopping for a little while to gaze with eyes of regret at the dilapidation of Mantua, and so along through the second creek neighborhood, until we came to the Sojourner's place,--some kind of Mary's I believe.

It was a simple house,--and somewhat bereft of architectural features of refinement or interest, but the people were extremely kind, and from them we learned that the ladies of Kindston are intent on writing up their various old homes,--each one doing her own, and including in the collection and old map of Kingston, as it was originally laid out but never completed. I hope to see the various accounts by the several ladies of their individual homes.

We had now left the Kingston Road and were heading north on the Liberty road, on which we continued until we reached the Heannette road,--a lovely old trace which has been ruined by some road commissioner's mania for cutting everything insight, including the fine old magnolias, foot thick holly trees, etc., which had so long made it more beautiful, perhaps, than any road in the District.

We had some difficulty in finding the sight of the old Dunbar House,--Dunbarton, for which we were searching. However, I did at last find a nice darkie to direct us,--da kies are hard to find at this time, as most of them are in the cotton fields, and through his knowledge of the region we were soon on our way again. When I had gone to his cabin to find someone, he had come out on the gallery attired in overalls, but said he would like to change them for pants to go with us, if I cared to wait. He said he had his wife and boy in the cotton patch picking this morning, and while they were thus engaged he would like to slip up to the store and get some Red Mule (chewing tobacco).

But he wasn't long in coming, and it was only a few miles by twisting and turning to reach the Dunbarton plantation, and as we had had to go around 2 sides of a triangle, our guide, in leading us, found himself almost back home again.

Dunbarton turned out to be in a location quite different from what I had expected. It is on rather high table land in his Second Creek neighborhood, with few trees about the sight or the old plantation house which burned in 1884. But here were the delicious little out buildings,--many of them of brick, and here was the one about the size of a modest sized room, with a brick chimney and a single door to the house itself, where J. F. H. Claiborne had written his famous History of Mississippi.

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And here it was at Dunbarton that the remarkable Martha Willis Dunbar had raised her children after their father's premature death, had employed the youthful S. S. Prentice as their tutor, and had successfully operated the plantation for years and years before the Civil War. And here it was, too, after that conflict was over, that the old lady at 80 re-organized the plantation system,--now that slavery had vanished, to successfully operate the place on a free labor basis, and here the great of a region great in great minds and civilized people revolved in admiration about the flame of this exceptional woman.

But time was pressing, and we couldn't linger longer, and so we turned toward home, passing lovely Roseland Plantation,--its old house hidden away in the trees,--this is the place which Mary's Aunt, Mrs. Ayres of Melmont in Natchez owns, but always seems prone to let anyone visit,--probably because it hasn't a few coats of paint. It was a pity we didn't have a couple of extra minutes to top the front gate.

And so back home along the Duck Pond Road,--passing Trinity in our flight, and stopping only for a moment to call on Miss Rebecca at Propinquity near Washington,--the home of so many memories, which General Covington had built when he came down with his family from Maryland in the early 1800's, bringing the Magruder children--Mary, Rebecca, and the twins, Olivia and Lavinia Magruder,--the two latter to become wives of White Turpin (Lavinia) and Joseph Dunbar (Olivia).

It's a lovely old house,--Propinquity,--hard by the emplacement of Fort Dearborn which the General commanded in the early 1800's. Dr. James Branch, of Washington, Miss., purchased the house in 1830, and it has been in that family since. The poor old lady who lies there today is rather silly. She could tell me something about the Branches, although she said she didn't know much about the Covingtons since they were none of her kind. As builders of her old family home, I should have thought she might have been interested, or as one of the State's most distinguished citizens, it might have intrigued her, I thought,--but I was wrong.

And so after admiring the exceptionally fine mantle piece, and a couple of other architectural features, we made our adieux, and flew on down the old back road,--the Bisslan River Road to Edgewood, and home. Dinner was at one, and until three we rested our eyes,--

At three we took to the road again, traveling in the

Between Homewood and the edge of Natchez, we ran over a horse shoe which punctured the rear tire, and again I realized how pleasantly convenient it is to be driving with one at such a time who among other things owns a garage, for Mary merely got out and telephoned town, and within five minutes a service car appeared and within a couple of minutes had a new tire on the car and we were on our way again. After shopping a bit in Natchez, we ~~drove~~ drove out Liberty Road, and turned in the private gate to Windy Hill Manor,--as pretty and remote a two mile drive as I know.



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There were a couple of tumbled down darkies working along the road and near by was a tumbled down truck. It seems, that some of the darkies on the place got Miss Elizabeth to buy them a truck with the understanding that with the truck one could sell wood in Natchez, and that the wood cutter and Miss Elizabeth could split the profits. I'm afraid Miss Elizabeth for long after the second hand truck has disappeared will have nothing but expense to share,--although possibly a original investment will sufficiently break her ephemeral finances so that additional expenses may not even have a chance at consideration. She went to Jeff with an idea of securing an old truck from him for this purpose, but he not only advised her against it, but also refused to have any thing to do with such a transaction. She accordingly found someone else who would palm off an old chestnut on her.

Reaching the Manor house, we found it securely locked, although in response to our knock, we heard an excited chattering from within, and we realized the girls were in a dither of excitement as to the identity of their visitors. We waited a generous quarter of an hour, when we heard footsteps approaching the front door, and Miss Beatrice appeared, attired in a dress and skirt of uncertain relationship, a little blue jacket, white shoes and a largeish garden hat. She was delighted to see Mary and kissed her warmly. She remembered me too, but didn't embrace me although her nervous cordiality lead me to believe than she was enchanted to see someone in long pants,--a weakness on the part of these poor old repressed maidens.

We sat for a few moments in the drawing room when Miss Maude, in a smart looking dress of Alice blue appeared. The most emotionally stable of the three sisters, she greeted us more in a balanced manner that either of the other two could, and while Miss Beatrice retired,--she explained she had been picking pears and therefore was attired as for the garden, and would accordingly like to make herself more presentable. Miss Maude called our attention to a print of one of El Greco's Madonna's, sitting on a easle in the place of honor in the room. She explained that some admired, who didnot reveal her name, had sent this picture from Detroit, sometime after a Pilgrimage to Windy Hill Manor. The girls concluded that this person must have been a member of the Mellon family, as Elgreco's Madonna had been in the Mellon Collection, turned over to the United States Government, and to be housed in the National Gallery in Washington. It was only then that it dawned on Mary and me that they were under the impression that this was an original El Greco,--although obviously enough it was merely a print. Miss B. returned at about this point, and with Miss Maude, ~~xxxx~~ joined in their extacies of pride over the possession of the El Greco. Miss Maude, in regarding this item which probably cost about twelve dollars and a half, ventured that it was no doubt worth about seven or eight thousand dollars,-- "The Mellons, you know,--and they certainly were kind to take this from the National Collection and send it to us." Poor silly kindly, fanciful old darlin' poor old Miss Elizabeth wasn't feeling well enough to appear, and so we sent in a glass of wine and some cakes which Mary had brought in order that we might drink to her health,--her birthday

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being at hand, while Miss B. and Miss Maude, Mary and I performed our little conviviality in the messy drawing room without the presence of theeldest sister.

Back home for supper and after Mary, Jeff and I sat in the lovely library of Edgewood talking bout the Statton girls. I had learned from Myrtle on Wednesday night that the Garden Club had decided that it was impracticable to keep the Windy Hill Manor item on on the Pilgrimage,--from ~~xxx~~ the ~~xxxx~~ proceeds of which Mesdames Stanton had gained most of their sustenance during the past few years. Most Pilgrims didn't seen much to Windy Hill Manor, the road out there were bad, and there were lots of complaints about the nothingness of such a long dirve on the part of the customers. It was accordingly decided that they would be taken of the Pilgrimage, but that their house would be "starred, indicating a listing in Garden Club literature, a gateman provided during the season, and all the moneys taken in at Windy Hill Manor would be theirs, plus a hundred dollar gift from the Club.

They had accordingly advised the Sataon girls of their decision, but the girls say, after thinking the matter overthey believe they prefer to stay on the Pilgrimage,--either a little dull as to the situation or feigning ignorance.

But the garden club has figured without Miss Elizabeth who, before entering the Pilgrimage Club, extracted a paper from the Club, stating that the Manor would be on the tour. Now, Says Miss Elizabeth, if the Club takes them off, they will sue,--and an injunction at the time the Pilgrims start converging on Natchez would certainly through the whole business into an uproar, with results which might be devastating to the whole membership.

It is certqinly interesting to contemplate the futre and imagine how this matter will turn out, for it appears that this old, old lady,--as curious as they make them, and certainly as much out of ~~the~~ touch with realities as any human being on earth could be, may do to up-set a whole bevy of the finest, richest and most influential ladies of the great houses of opulent Natchez.

Of course, if the Garden Club were smart, they would certainly pay Miss Elizabeth to sue them, since t is would result in enormous publicity for the Natchez Pilgrimage, and the ultimate interest in the place would be more far-reaching than its excellent publicity has already engineered and the unbelievable notoriety of such cases as the Goat Castle Murder Case has brought home to the ghoulis. Extraordinary place Natchez. It's too bad the five cent cigars of the pl ce don't realize it before they throw it away or beat it into the same pattern as a thousand other uninterestin places.



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Beautifully clear warm day, a little too warm for moving about but perfectly grand if sitting, as I did most of the morning on the side gallery at Edgewood, hammering away at the typewriter with more speed than accuracy, as lazy breezes from the south west wandered fittfully from the front facade, carrying with it a heavy freight of sweet olive fragrance.

Mary's sister-in-law, Bernice, from Ferriday arrived sometime early in the morning, or possibly during the night, and with Mary she went horseback riding until eleven when we all drove down to the Lambdin store for coacolas, and so back for dinner about one, joined by Jeff and Newman Henderson, whom everyone outside the family refers to as Sam.

At three Bernice drove Mary and me up to Mount Ararat plantation to call on Mr. Drake and his sister, Mrs. Cooper.

I found Magruder as hospitable and gracious as always, and withal as punctillious. We had a coca cola and chatted for a few moments, during which time I tried to pump Mrs. Cooper about Elizabeth Greenfield Roche, feeling that Miss Jane ought to know much about the donor of Elizabeth Academy, since she had written the only known pamphlet in existence on that institution. Miss Jane expressed her surprise that I seemed to know something about the residents of Washington, Miss., in ante-bellum times, but either through false modesty or mere whim to be contrary, she professed to know little or nothing about anything I inquired. This represents the third time I have hinted broadly that I should enjoy seeing her pamphlet on Elizabeth Academy but my success in this third attempt was just as non-existent as my two previous ones.

While we chatted, or rather while I plied questions, Magruder drew a volume from the book shelves which, I felt, might be the Rev. Jones book on Methodism in the South West which I had long wanted to see, but something one of the ladies wanted at that moment forced him to lay aside the book to attend to the tray or whatever the lady asked for, and again the Reverend Jones' book eluded me, never to be seen again on this visit.

In accordance with a suggestion which Magruder had made to me by correspondence sometime ago, he had arranged for him and me to call on Mr. Robert Baker of Pecane Grove Plantation, Church Hill that afternoon. As this place adjoins Gayosa, the old Green home where Mr. Fonda now lives, I realized the trip would be but a few miles from Mount Ararat, so that the journey would be a short one, and in consequence, I hope our conversation with Mr. Baker would be long.

Mr. Drake explained our previous appointment with Mr. Baker and my desire to chat with him for a while regarding Jefferson County personalities, suggesting that the ladies might stay and chat with Miss Jane if they wished while we were gone. They thought they would like to go along with us together and we accordingly all said goodby to Miss Jane and started off,--the ladies pointing out that they wouldn't talk while at the Bakers but would sit quietly in the car or look over the house and so not disturb us.

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In no time we had passed "Aunt" Olivia's plantation, Arudno, and Miss Lulu Shields home, the Episcopal Church on the top of Church Hill, and so on to Mr. Bakers,--turing off sharply on his plantation road just before reaching Gayosa.

It's a modestly proportioned house, this Pecane Grove plantation house, with a gallery running across the front, and a heavy shade of wisteria forming almost a second gallery in front of the first on the great trellis that likewise runs the full length of the old home.

Mr. Baker met us as the car stopped before the house. He is a fine looking man, with ruddy complexion and soft white hair, and bubbling over with suppressed enthusiasm and kindness. Born in 1862,--eighteen-sixty-two, Mr. Baker, with remarkable memory and clarity of mind, recalls most of the splendid galaxy of ante-bellum personalities of this region who survived the Confederate War. I was especially interested in his impression of old Capt. Johnston who had died in 1897. Capt. Johnston had been Aunt Olivia Dunbar's executor, her Will specifying that no bod should be required. Her estate was large at the time of her death in 1859, but when Capt. Johnston got through administering it, most of the financial clauses had not been carried out, her plantation Arudno had been sold to the Captain's son and a whispering campaign gotten under way which would still be going briskly eighty years afterward.

But perhaps the thing about Capt. Johnston which impressed me most, as Robert Baker, explained it to me was the fact that Capt. Johnston had known President Jefferson quite well. Here I found myself speaking with a man who had known Capt. Johnston intimately for years while the later as a youth in Virginia had been a neighbor and frequent visitor at Mr. Jefferson's hospitable home, Montecello.. If Mr. Baker had told me he had spoke with one who had known Adam, I shouldn't have been more amazed.

In the mean time, Mrs. Baker had joined us on the gallery, and being rather deaf, the ladies found it somewhat difficult to carry on a conversation with ~~them~~ her, for they had joined us on the opposite end of the gallery, so that in order to entertain them as well as us, Mr. Baker would occasionally direct conversation in their direction, although I fear they found all this historical reminiscence rather dull.

Evenutally Mrs. Baker asked them to see the interior of the old house,--I believe it was built in 1803 or 1804, and while they were gone, Mr. Baker spoke of David Hunt who had owned so much property in this locality. Among other places he had purchased had been The Plains plantation, formerly the property of Joseph Dunbar, but sold by his widow, Olivia Magruder Dunbar to Mr. Hunt. Mr. Hunt, sometime later,--after 1847, I believe, had been traveling in the north, where one day he chanced to see a youth picking up odd iron parts in an old wagon lot. The youth had



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that he was ~~xxxx~~ in the habit of retrieving these odd bits of metal which others cast aside, feeling that they would be of use in some way or other, if for no other reason than to be sold for old iron. Mr. Hunt was impressed by this turn of mind, asked the youth if he would care to go South to take up planting, and the youth accepted Mr. Hunt's offer. Within a short time after their return to Jefferson County, Mr. Hunt had ~~xxxx~~ taught the youth, Mr. Bevan, many of the details of over-seeing, and within the space of a few years, Mr. Bevan on seeing the Plains plantation of Mr. Hunt, expressed his wish to own such a place. Mr. Hunt said he might purchase the plains from him at a reasonable figure,--and I believe without interest, and the property was accordingly transferred. Mr. Bevan married a young woman from the North, and as I recall, this couple figure in the Diary of Eliza Lloyd Magruder.

But time was slipping by relentlessly, and it was obvious that we had best be getting along, so we made our adieux and returned to Mount Ararat by way of the Pine Ridge road. We chatted again for a few moments with Miss Jane while we had a round of whiskey and soda, and then continued our way to Edgewood.

Supper at 7:30, and an hour of conversation, and thence to our respective beds.

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Sunday, Oct. 6th, 1940.

The weather continues perfect, all sunshine and blue sky save for an occasional great pure white cotton like cloud floating by.

We arose leisurely, and it was after nine before I encountered anyone in the gardens overlooking the artificial lake. It was Mary's brother, Newman, or Sam, as some call him. I found him of a sympathetic turn of mind, and we talked his subject,--Geology,--and he recounted his experiences in Colorado while examining the ore in the dumps of worked out mines.

Bernice, his wife, joined us shortly and we found Mary on the terrace watering her plants while Jeff was examining the japonicas and other flowering bushes. The boys were playing Indian and cowboy,--the Indian seeming to be Jeff, the elder, who swooped down on Waldo on his ~~xxxx~~ bicycle, as though riding a mustang.

After coffee at ten, Sam drove off down to Greenwood plantation while Bernice and Jeff went horsback riding, and Mary and the boys and I walked up a mile and a half,--following the old Bisslan road to Mistletoe plantation which Mary owns and hopes to restore.

It is a lovely old house,--not large, sitting back possibly a quarter of a mile from the road, up an avenue which rises slightly as one mounts toward the highest point on the plantation where I think I have described the house elsewhere in this Journal, and mentioned Peter Bisslan, son of the family founder in this region, and how this son had built this fine little architectural gem in the wilderness, had suffered the ravages of typhoid fever, been denied drinking water, and had accordingly fell into the enormous cistern, when, unguarded, he had slipped from his servants seeking a drink and fallen into the giant receptacle.

After the Bisslans, the Atchinsons came to live at Mistletoe, and after them, and the War had finished off Mr. Archers private school at Oakwood, on the Chish Hill road, the Archers had moved to Mistletoe, and were perhaps its most intellectual occupants. Like so many of the 19th century residents of Adams and Jefferson Counties, the Archers were exceptional people, interested in a variety of subjects and practicing planting with no greater concentration than they practiced their social or intellectual pursuits,--with modesty and good taste, without ever letting any of these various lines of endeavor dominate the other.

I suppose that they would have been greater names in any of these fields if they had devoted more time to any single one at the expense of the others, but at the same time, of course, they would have sacrificed the admirable balance of life which made this group of people the most distinguished class in America. Nellie Wailes Brandon, whose husband, as a boy, attended Dr. Archer's school at Oakwood, told me that Dr. Archer was famous for his erudition although he never excelled in imparting his learning to his pupils. Mr. Baker, on Saturday, supplemented this statement



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by saying that when he attended Dr. Archer's school with Miss Victor Shields,--at least I understood that the young lady attended the same school, the students were not long in realizing that Dr. Archer loved to recite poetry, and frequently included lines which he had composed himself. The youths, taking advantage of their teachers' weakness for verse, and possibly realizing their own short comings in the preparation of the day's lessons, would some how frame questions to bring up a point concerning some verse or other, knowing full well that their inquiry would elicit a profound exploration of the point thus brought up, and that the entire class period would be exhausted by Dr. Archer's flight into verse. I must inquire from Mr. Baker if he has any of Dr. Archer's original verses or if he knows any former pupils or friends who might possess them, so they might be appended at this point.

Mary and I wandered through the lovely old house, talking over points to be carried out in the restoration and furnishing of its interior, and of additions to be carried out at the right side of the house to balance the long dining room wing on the left, with projecting wings to be extended several rooms in length to the rear on either side, leaving a brick wall to connect this two at the rear in which openings will be left to swing the several fine bells Mary has for that purpose. This will leave the center of this walled in area to swing around the great cistern, while on the right will run back a pantry, kitchen and garage on the left with a series of bed rooms on the right. I think it will be an imposing little jewel when and if.....

And so back down the trace road to Edgewood for dinner of Canadian duck, and afterward a siesta for the family and guests, while I walked down to the Pine Ridge Church to admire its noble simplicity, and try out its organ, and to examine the session house more thoroughly.

Back home before seven, with highballs immediately afterward and an excellent supper to follow.

About 8 o'clock Bernice and Newman said goodnight to return to their home in Ferriday, La., while the rest of us chatted at length regarding the potential explosion which Miss Elizabeth is stirring up in her rarefied atmosphere of Windy Hill Manor.

I had heard from Myrtie on Wednesday night, that the Garden Club had each year received a great many complaints from Pilgrims after their departure from Natchez, declaring that they had considered the inclusion of the Manor on the Pilgrimage to have been a disappointment, nerve or flim-flam, depending upon the irate state of mind of the various visitors. In the first place, they pointed out, the place is 7 miles from town and probably they never saw the lovely traces they passed through to get ther or the remarkable private drive through the woods and up the hill after reaching the entrance to the estate. In the second

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place, in rainy weather,, because of the condition of this private road, wreckers frequently had to be called or stationed there to pull the cars out. In this third place, on arriving at the residence of the Misses Stanton, they saw only an old tumbled down house and it wasn't worth looking at. For me, who had always been charmed with its classic simplicity, its historic associations with Aaron Burr and the distinguished neighbors of his host, Benjamin Osmun at the time of his trial, and the romance of Burr with Madeline Price, ~~thxxx~~ plus the extraordinary personalities of the present occupants of the Manor, the house had always been one of the most appealing in this remarkable region of fine house, amazing history and unbelievable romance. But the average visitor had felt none of this.

And since it is the public which must be served, the Garden Club decided it was better to take the house off the Pilgrimage, although the income from it to the ladies Stanton was of great moment in eeking out their precarious existence. The Garden Club accordingly visited the ladies of the Manor, explained the situation in which the Club found itself, and said that they would in taking them off the tour, provide them with a gate keeper, advertise the Manor as a home of especial worth, silver starring it to attract especial attention, and at the same time permit the Windy Hill chatelaines to retain all the money thus taken in. I must say, I think the proposition a fair one.

But Miss Elizabeth, sly old fox that she is, pretended that she didn't understand what the ladies were driving at, and ended up by saying that after mature thought she thought she was content to stay on the Pilgrimage, as in the past. The Club representatives were floored.

They accordingly said they would ~~rightx~~ write her their decision, and promptly went back to town, put down their proposals in a letter and advised her that she and her Manor house were off the tour.

This is where Myrtie's story ended. But Mary learned a further chapter from her Saturday chat with Miss Maude.

Unlike everyone else with plantation homes on the pilgrimage, Miss Elizabeth demanded,--and received,--a contract from the club when she put Windy Hill Manor on the pilgrimage. The paper, drawn up by Gerard Brandon, is legal, according to Miss Maude, and carries no time limit it is to run. Miss Elizabeth therefore, armed with this document and the subsequent one from the Club, purposes to sue for non-fulfillment.

Jokingly I suggested that I thought both the Garden Club and Mesdames Stanton should employ me for advise to turn a pretty piece of publicity in favor of both parties. My idea would be to have the Garden Club accept the suit brought by Miss Elizabeth who should attach the Club's fund until the legal point involved could be settled by the courts. This would start another Confederate War in the Pilgrimage, which has already had grand publicity from their first, and as a result of tearful tales in the American press, everyone will be doubly interested to explore this fabulous region.



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I awoke about five this morning, listened for a moment to the rain, and then turned over and didn't awaken again until my breakfast tray arrived. By then the sun was out in full force.

Mary came down a little after eight, --just after Fejj had left for business and the boys had gone to school in Natchez.

We drove to town shortly afterward, had the trailer attached to the new Buick, for Mary is returning to Melrose with me to pick up her new loom which Henry has just completed for her. As we started out she said she felt sure that about the time she arrived, Henry's wife would be having that baby she has been threatening to deliver since last July 4th when she was admitted to the Shreveport Hospital one day and sent back to Melrose the next.

After doing a little shopping, we said goodbye to Jeff at his office and then started out, crossing the new bridge and again remarking upon its unusual narrowness.

At Vidalia we headed toward Ferriday and there inquired where we would find Mr. Henderson. Given directions to a place near the edge of the town, we drove there, and ran one front wheel off into a ditch,--or one might say canal, for here the gutters are two or three feet deep and seem to cross streets with abandon. While Mary was waiting for the wrecking car to lift her out, I took a direction from the woman from whose house Mary had telephoned the garage, and went down the street several houses to call on Bernice and tell her that we would be along in a moment for the coffee we had promised to take with her.

The maid at the house where I called, after saying that Mrs. Henderson was at home, asked me to come in and wait, as Mrs. H. was telephoning. I waited. Within a few minutes she appeared, standing between me and the light of the doorway, so that I couldn't see her face. I asked or rather explained that I was calling on Mrs. Henderson, and I couldn't believe that Bernice had forgotten me after having spent the last two days at Edgewood. The woman said that she was Mrs. Henderson, however, and asked to what circumstance she was indebted for my visit. As I couldn't be sure it wasn't Bernice, I felt a little at a loss for words, but did ask her if she was the Mrs. Henderson of Natchez,--although I don't know why I chose that town, since Bernice never lived there. But Mrs. Henderson said she had never lived there, and so by that time, it began dawning on me that there must be two Mrs. Henderson's in Ferriday, and so I explained by error and departed. I found Mary still awaiting the wrecking car. It had come up the short street it seems, turned around before reaching Mary and disappeared again in the distance. A truck passed at this moment, and noticing the predicament we were in, stopped, and the driver and a couple of darkies jumped out. After examining the situation, they explained that Mary could back up and so get all four wheels on the road again without damage to the car, which Mary did, and we continued our search for another Mrs. Henderson. We found her. We had coffee. We met several young ladies who dropped in to call, -

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wives of other young Geologists of the same Company that Mary's brother is with. It seems there are four or five,--or possibly more of the youthful couples with enforced vagrant habits, traveling from town to town in Texas, Mississippi and Louisiana, as there husbands are located in one place three weeks or in another for four months. Since they all are moved at the same time to the same place, they are never without friends in any town, although never in any of the places long enough to make very many new ones, I imagine.

It was eleven when we got under way again, and it was one when we reached Winfield where we got a snack to eat,--without beer as Wynn Parish is dry. And so on to Natchitoches, and down to Melrose by 2:30.

It was good to be home again. The leaves seemed to have fallen considerably since I had been gone, but the gardens more brilliant with flowers.

We found Aunt Cammie on her sofa. It was grand to be back home again. Shortly steps on the stairs, and Frank appeared. It was good to be back again.

We had coffee before three, and Aunt Cammie suggested that Mary and I might drive down to Henry's house as he hadn't been to work that day. It seems the baby had been born on Saturday, and Henry had been celebrating.

We accordingly ran down the river road to his cabin where we found a mid-wife taking care of the mother and new born child. Henry's wife said he wasn't home, that he was at work, having left early that morning from home. It was dark in the house,--all the blinds and doors closed, and I couldn't see Henry's wife beneath the mosquito bar which covered her bed. I asked if I might see the baby. The mother seemed pleased, and told me to look under the netting where she and the baby were hidden. I lifted the bar and peered under. It was so dark I couldn't make out much but the white clothes and a spot of color. I glanced at it a moment, thinking the baby certainly had plenty of noses, and remarked that it was a pretty baby,--as though any baby a couple of days old ever was. Henry's wife, a realist, said: "You haint been looking at the baby yet. What's youse lookin' at am my toes. The baby, she's up here!" I peered in another general direction away from the spot I had been so intent upon, but saw nothing, smiled wanely and said I thought it was a pretty baby anyhow.

Back home and over to my maisonette, redolent with the fragrance of butterfly lilies Aunt Cammie had placed there in anticipation of my coming. Supper at five and chatting until 7:30, and so goodnight.



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Tuesday, Oct. 7th, 8th or 9th, 1940.

I seem to have lost count of the calendar, but I still have hold of the days of the week.

The weather remains fine, and before six thirty I had had my coffee, dressed and picked up a sandwich in the kitchen which Frank had made for me. A few seconds later I was in the big road.

I walked quite a ways, rode some to, and was back home a little after eleven, having come up the lane with Bill as far as the saloon, passing up his offer to deliver me "plum" at "elrose." He told me that Henry had been in the saloon early in the morning, being still on the bender which he got under way last Saturday. I hope he gets around to the plantation today or Mary will not get so very far with her "looming".

After dinner we ran through the mail which had accumulated during my absence, and afterward I hammered away at my typewriter until coffee time when Aunt Cammie came over to sit with me for a few minutes and report that Mr. and Mrs. Robert Walmsley had just come in from Dallas, Texas. They will remain until a week from tomorrow, which means that Aunt Cammie will not be able to run over to Natchez for me and at the same time pick up Mrs. Brandon, as we had hoped. The Walmsleys are dull people, but his mother had been kind to Aunt Cammie 50 years ago when she came to this region, and Aunt Cammie is paying the debt. The interest seems exorbitant,--or perhaps I should say the lack of interest.

Supper at 6:15, but Robert W., didn't appear until we were done, as he had gone fishing immediately upon his arrival.

Mary came over at six for a while with me at Lyle's, after we had fed little and big grandpa. We returned to the big house, but found conversation extremely dull, and Mary and I retired to our separate domiciles. From intuitive impulses, I had thought the evening would be much different, but I was wrong. I consoled myself on the keyboard of my machine, and another day was done.

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Wednesday, Oct. 10th?, 1940.

Perfection in the weather continues.

I awoke a little after four and saw from my bed that the lights upstairs in the big house were ablaze. I was a little startled, fearing that someone was ill, and then realized that Robert had threatened to go fishing early in the morning. \* He appeared to be keeping his word.

The clock struck five, and it was still dark outside, and the lights in the big house still blazed. I thought of poor Aunt Cammie on the sleeping porch on which the lights would be shining, realizing that her much needed rest was being cut down a-plenty by this curious enthisast of "saac Walton.

Frank arrived at six o'clock. He said Mr. Robert was in the kitchen building a fire. At least two hours ago he had been up and dressed but hadn't gotten further than disturbing other people's rest. The first are certainly getting a break at least.

At eight Mary and I walked over to Zelina's. We found her with lumonia in the top of her head, but as always ready for a chuckle. She was sweeping her dirt floor, but dropped her broom to entertain us with stories and show us quilts her Mama and her "hold hant" had made ever so many years ago. We really had a nice visit, and half a dozen chickens rambled around the livingroom-bedroom to give a certain atmosphere I had already outlined to Mary. Like all other real people, Mary found Zelina a grand person,--chickens or no chickens.

Back home, Mary went to work on her weaving with Henry. He certainly is a dumb bell when it comes to personal relations. Yesterday afternoon he had declared to Aunt Cammie that he was going to work Wednesday only, regardless of the fact that Mary would need him Thursday morning before she and I left for Natchez, for, it seems, the circus is in Alexandria Thursday, and Henry certainly isn't going to let mere convenience of others and pay for himself restrain him from seeing the parade.

After dinner I walked over to the gin to watch the ever fascinating operations of that wonderful handmaiden of southern planters roll out the white gold. I talked with Nathaniel and Pany, the latter telling me that someone was looking for me yesterday but he had explained I wasn't back from Natchez as yet. I had never thought how important a country social news column might be.

Mary came over to see me at Lyle's a little before five to relax from her strenuous labors. We found ice and relaxed. After supper Mary returned to the loom house to work until eight, while I sat with Aunt Cammie and the Walmsleys until the same hour, returning to Lyle's to work on my typewriter until 10:30, and so to bed.



Thursday, not  
Wednesday.  
Oct 10th, 1940.

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Another perfect day, cool, blue and gold.

Frank arrived at six, and while I had my first cup of coffee, we fixed him up as best we could for his insipiant cold.

By the time the gin whistle blew at 6:30, I was on the front gallery of the big house, waiting for Mary, and with her, I walked to Cane River bridge, crossed it to see the marvelous Fragonards painted on the silver surface of the River,--luxuriant trees in black reflected from equally opulent ones on the margin of the water, with the great golden finger of the church floating gently on the surface of the water.

We walked down the river road as far as the big mulato house which Lyle had once hoped to purchase for a mulato museum, and thence retraced our steps back home for a good breakfast in the summer dining room, amidst a vast chorus of wrens and mocking birds just beyond the screens in the flowing bushes beyond.

I did a few little odds and ends during the morning, talked for half an hour with Aunt Cammie and immediately after dinner, with Mary's loom securely stationed in the trailer, started for Natchez. It was a quick trip, accompanied with much conversation along the route. Among other things we spoke of Frank, and the theory that some people have that the darkies care for any white individual only in proportion to the potential money that can be extracted. Mary disagreed heartily, saying that she had never seen anyone's face beam with so much affection as Frank's had when he saw me on Monday after my absences of four or five days. She said she had certainly expected, in view of the happiness he radiated, that he was going to ~~throw~~ throw his arms around my neck and embrace me. I told her I should have been enchanted if he had.

We were amused, in paying toll on the new Natchez bridge, that we were charged 70 cents in returning to Mississippi while we were charged only 60 in leaving. It appears the bridge control sets this premium on entrance into Miss., since others had told us they had fared accordingly.

Back at Edgewood for supper, several about 8 o'clock, we chatted until 10, and thence to bed.

Friday, Oct. 11th, 1940.

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Up early, and down stairs before eight, so that I might ride into town with the boys on our way to school. I saw Mary in the hall, and she gave me a picnic lunch, for I expected to be in the traces all day, and far from food dispensaries.

Leroy drove us in to town, and then took me along Liberty road, passed Windy Hill Manor and thence around to Mr. Hazelip's old plantation, Trinity, on Duck Pond Road. Here I left Leroy, who returned home with the car. I expected to talk for an hour or so with Mr. H., and walk back the 8 or 10 miles home. On reaching Trinity, however, I learned that Mr. H. was in town,--Natchez, and would not be back before Sunday. This let out my plans for the day and my hopes of examining his old documents.

I accordingly chatted for a few moments with Mrs. Hazelip and her brother, Mr. Surret, and then decided to walk down to Dunbarton, the old Marth Willis Dunbar place, to further examine the little brick house on the place where Claiborne had written his his story of Mississippi.

But the traces through this region are long and winding, and none of them bear any sign posts, and a little after twelve, I discovered that I had lost my way, and was not far from Kingston,--some 10 or 15 miles below my starting point,--Trinity Plantation.

I explored many an old tumbled down place, talked with various people I encountered at long intervals. The darkies were pleasant to talk with but the white labors on the road were dry and weakened and rather mean in their outlook, although ~~very~~ <sup>very</sup> ~~much~~ <sup>much</sup> of being nice, as they felt they would like to be but knew not how. I was anxious to find someplace that sold coca-cola, but there wasn't a store or garage in all this vast network of summer roads which I traversed. One white man, working on the Sandy Creek bridge, offered me sandwiches and half his coffee from his thermos bottle, but I still had my sandwiches and I didn't want to rob the poor man of his beverage, and so I declined.

Unexpectedly I found myself in the same region Mary and I had stopped to ask the way a week ago, near the cabin of the darkie who had helped us out then. I heard his voice from a field suddenly call out: "Boss, you sure am burnin' yourself out too fast, walking in the hot sun so fast." I was glad to see him again, and we talked about the "Misery" of the season, in consequence of the poor crops.

On my way again, I lost my direct route several times, but finally reached a gate which I thought lead to Roseland Plantation, the old Ayres Plantation which no one but Mrs. Ayres, and her sister, Miss Corinne Henderson, Mary's two aunts seem to have seen in years. Whenever Mary had manifested an desire to see the place, Mrs. Ayres had thought of reasons why she shouldn't so that Roseland has become something of a forbidden mystery which no one must inquire about and no one must see.

I climbed the gate, and followed a slanted road, and a winding path across barren fields until I came to a little settlement of negro houses and shacks shimmering in the hot afternoon sun. A tall, athletic negro of about fifty years, was giving an old mule a haircut under the protecting branches of a large berry tree.



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I have always liked china berry trees, and I was glad to catch my breath for a moment in its shade as the mule's haird cut was having the finishing touches put on it.

The man said his name was Henry, and he was Mrs. Ayre's colored overseer. He wanted to show me a picture in his house of himself and wife and their 15 children. It appeared in Fortune Magazine some time back. I saw some of the 15 children and his wife, and the picture of them, too. The darkies was obviously proud of it and of his prowess of xxxx as a begetter of many off-spring, and seemingly xx unmindful of any relation between a hard row to hoe and the considerable progeny.

He gave me a drink of water from the old xxxx cistern,--and for this I was vastly grateful, for my throat was parched. He said we might go and look at the old big house if I cared to. I did. And so he on his mule and I on my legs traversed the long and winding lane amxx - I had so recently covered, crossed the road from which I had entered originally, and struck off across undulating lands, pitiful with stunted corn and depressing with cotton stalks whose bolls never had and never would open. Roseland is a big plantation, I discovered, for we traveled for miles, and Roseland today is just another classic example of absentee landlordism, I'm afraid, with the soil going out in washes and little or nothing being put back into the ground by the darkies who farm it at a meager existence. It made me think of the white man appropriating the America continent in part because the Indians weren't using it as much and for the purposes the Europeans had in mind for it. Something of the same idea might be done about places like Roseland, I thought, on the same line of reasoning.

Eventually we reached the edge of the cluster of out buildings,--barns in various conditions of dilapidation, corn cribs in good repair, smoke house, carriage house etc., and thence around to the big house. It impressed me enormously, for it seemed exactly like a substantial New England farm house which had been built to house a successful farmer with more out-lay on housing than is customary, but none of the non-essential appurtenances and none of the architectural graces which practically all Southern homes of the early 1800's sprinkled about their manor houses to lend satisfaction to the soul. The house is a story and a half high, white with green blinds and dominated in the center by a good gallery with square columns with projecting wings on either end beyond.

Another element which makes Roseland house seems so odd is the fact that this extensive New England architectural piece is set in a South Carolina atmosphere, surrounded by a huge park of giant most-draped cedars and live oaks,--acres and acres of park which seems like a flat island of green and shade set on the elevation of which one isn't conscious, since there is no access to sky or horizon through the curtained screens of overlapping greenery. A antebellum fence surrounds this park of vast acreage, and a huge drive,--x two in fact, --an old one of before 1860 and a later one, are still clearly defined. I have a feeling, as has Mary, that Roseland house is building with marvelous old furniture and precious bric-a-brac, but

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I guess neither of us will ever see any of it, since Madam Ayres seems intent on keeping it shut off from the world.

interrption.

After half an hour, I started back with Henry, the latter astride his mule, toward the Duck Pond road. Once again, I headed in the general direction of Washington, which Henry said, was about 9 miles. The traces were marvelous in the afternoon light, with a heavy fragrance varying from step to step with sweet or pungent woods odors and curious heady perfume from flowers the names of which I couldn't imagine.

Sometimes the roads were confusing, where traces divided in uncertain directions, and an absence of signs left it for the traveler to make his own choice which might take him within a few miles of his destination or through devious turnings to some point in an entirely opposite direction. By five thirty I was approaching Washington.

I stopped off at Shreff's Retreat, hoping that Miss Bessie Bailey might be at home to give me some sort of a drink, but Miss Bessie was in town, and my thirst was not assuaged. A little further along the road I inquired for a pretty colored girl, dressed in rough long pants, if my road was the nearest one leading to Washington. She said it was if I kept to the proper turns. I stepped along for another mile, and suddenly coming to a gate found an old darkie there who, in response to my inquiry regarding the nearness of Washington, replied:

"Lord, boos, this haint Washington. You done landed plum in the poor house,--for this place it seemed was that institution, housing both blacks and whites.

And so I followed my nose a little further along, and eventually reached a cement highway, - the first I had seen in nine hours, and so found Washington not far away. It was good to find coca-cola there, and thus refreshed, I continued along the main street, passed Jefferson College, the Wailes house, and so turned in at the road by Dr. Affleck's house, and started up the road toward Pine Ridge. That place is about 6 or 7 miles from Washington, I suppose, and at night was setting in. Before I had reached half the distance I had to cover, the moon was out, casting delicious shadows through the rich foliage all around me, and making the occasion darkie I met seem more a part of the lush foliage around me. At one point, I met five little darkies, the oldest possibly six, and the rest like steps down the scale from him. On his back,--x riding piggy-back, in fact, clutch a little tot of about two. Heaven knows whence they came or whither they might be going in the night. I saw no houses within miles.

This was the road the Prince of Jallon must have taken in going from his conferences with his protector, the good English Dr., in Washington, as the Prince returned home to Foster's Mound. A little further along, I came to St. Catherine's Creek, crossed it in the moonlight, and headed up the hill toward the Mound, from the windows of which gleamed two lights. I suppose in this fringe of live oaks which have surrounded the house on the top of the mound for years, the Prince himself must have seen this same sight many a time as he wearily trudged



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I had hoped to reach home, before supper was done, and so I continued at a fairly good pace, stopping only to talk for a few minutes and share a cigarette with two colored boys who appeared from nowhere in the traces.

Approaching Laguedoc, the road drops down sharply, and proportionately the straight wall like traces rise higher on either side. The thick overhanging trees and vines make a complete corridor of blackness ~~at~~ for a half a mile ahead. I could see nothing of the road ahead of me, hoping that from the feeling of the gravel under my feet I wouldn't crash into the ditch on either side. In a few moments, my eyes a bit accustomed to the blackness of this corridor, after the brilliance of the moonlight in which I had been walking just before, I noticed half a mile ahead and up the road, that a light, smooth and luscious, gleamed as through a doorway of the corridor. I assumed it was an approaching automobile, and imagined that Mary might have sent Leroy to look for me. But as I approached the light, I discovered that it didn't move, and then realized it was merely a spot on the trace where the absence of a tree let the moonlight filter through.

About seven I reached Pine Ridge, and there encountered several knots of darkies, in groups of a dozen or so, threading their way through the moonlight. One of them recognized me, and stopped to chat for a moment. She said she was on her way to church,--the candidates for Sunday's baptizing were ~~about~~ going to testify at the church and they were all going to take part in the meeting. I wanted to go too, but thought the better of my hostess, and so I continued along my route. About half past seven, I saw the lights of Edgewood shining or rather outshining the moonlight, and so I crossed the cattle impasse, and stepped into the house. The family had just started supper.

But being covered with a goodly coat of dust from the traces of Adams and Wilkinson Counties, I enjoyed a hot bath and fresh clothes before I joined those at the board. We chatted animatedly, although I let the solids go in favor of milk and an avocado salad.

The guests who had come up during the day from Biloxi on their way to New York, had already departed, and only Bernice and Sam, Mary Sister in law and brother rounded out the family group. We chatted until ten, when I retired, pleasantly exhausted after a days walk of some 40 miles, and so fell asleep.

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Saturday, Oct. 12th, 1940.

Another perfect day.

I lingered in bed after breakfast, arising only as the clock chimed 7:30, to spend the next couple of hours on the side gallery thundering away on the typewriter and inhaling the marvelous perfume of the sweet olive bushes which came in waves,--the perfume not the bushes from the gallery on the other side of the house.

About ten o'clock Mary and Bernice returned from their morning's canter and together we had coffee after which I finished up my work while they were dressing, and then the three of us got in the big road.

We traveled some five or six miles up the old Port Gibson road, now called the Pine Ridge-Church Hill road. It isn't paved and isn't used much save by the darkies and planters who travel it, for the average traveler never finds it and probably wouldn't know what to do with this lovely rural labyrinth if they should find themselves on it.

We turned off a private road and traveled a couple of miles further to Peachland Plantation,--a fine old mansion with double gallery running across the front. We were greeted by Mrs. Henderson whose home it is and by Mrs. James Archer whose late husband was the son of old Mr. Archer who lived so long at Oakwood, the 2,000 acre plantation which fronts the Church Hill-Washington road, where in ante bellum days the Archers were friends and neighbors of "Aunt" Olivia Magruder Dunbar at Arunda.

Old Mr. Archer had been born in 1811 and had operated his plantation, conducted a private school on the place for surrounding off-spring on neighboring plantations, and among other things had done much in writing what he was pleased to call poetry. According to Mrs. James Archer with whom I spoke, old Mr. Archer's other accomplishments included his ability to write the Lord's Prayer on a piece of paper the size of a dime. It wasn't clear to me just why anyone should undertake such a task, and through my mind ran a line of Frank's uttered one day when I gave him a small trinket:-- "Looks like a person's got a heap to do when they have to start in on somethin' as worth while as that."

Mrs. Henderson withdrew with Mary and Bernice to look for some material in which I was interested, thus giving Mrs. Archer an opportunity to speak confidentially with me. She got to the point immediately by saying: "First of all, tell me if you are married." I don't know just why, but she seemed pleased to learn that I wasn't.

As I understand it, the Archer's lived at Oakwood plantation



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until 1912, when the property passed to the Lambdins who held a mortgage on it. I suppose old Mr. Archer was dead by then--and I certainly hope he was, for having been born in 1811, he had been through enough of opulence and hard times in the spread of years from 1811 to the late 1890's when I believe he passed on. In any event, the Archers then moved down to the store behind the present Lambdin store on Pine Ridge, and I believe the present Mrs. Archer was the mistress of what was left of the Archer belongings at that time. It is my understanding that her late husband was a quiet little man, with little aptitude for waging a successful life against the odds of the times. Later the Archers moved up to Mistletoe, which Mary now owns, and I suppose they found it more reminiscent of Oakwood, although I gathered from Mrs. Archer that they never liked it there. I was a little shocked to learn that when they moved from Oakwood in 1912, they left an attic full of papers and books. These may still be there to this day, although I doubt if I shall ever get into the place to examine them, as Oakwood is now owned by the resident of Jefferson College, and if he doesn't value whatever might be left, I suppose he would immediately set high store on it if I should manifest any interest in the ~~xxx~~ things.

Mrs. Henderson and the others returned shortly, with a volume of old Mr. Archer's poetry, all written long hand, and a fat sheaf of typewritten pages of others from the same pen which someone had copied. They also brought with them the ~~x~~ Bissell and Dunbar families trees in imposing long rolls of paper. Mrs. Archer had been given these by someone, but she had torn them up and through them out, as of no interest to herself or anyone else, but Mrs. Henderson had felt differently.

We chatted for a few minutes longer, and then were on our way, bearing these memorials of another age when planters had time to operate a plantation, a school and dabble in rhymes ~~at~~ all at once.

Back home for dinner, and a short siesta before Magruder Drake called to take me down to see Mrs. Ward at Landsdowne. Mr. Ward is a grandson of old Dr. Haller Nutt, the builder of Longwood, while

Mrs. Ward, nee Marshall, is a great granddaughter, I believe, of old David Hunt, the most remarkable and successful of Mississippi planters. It is doubtful if either of these off spring of this gilded gentry take after their distinguished ancestors, as far as a highly developed acquisitive sense goes.

Landsdowne is a lovely old 1854 house, perhaps half a mile or more from the Pine Ridge Road, and hard by the ruins of Homewood. David Hunt had given Homewood to his daughter, Catherine as a wedding present, and Landsdowne to another daughter, Agnes. The approach to the old home is through the woods and across a very deep bayou, so that it seems much further from civilization than it actually is. The house is nobly build, restrained and elegant, with delicious out buildings lanking it in the rear. Its chief treasures aside from its architecture and memories are its fine silver, including items from the old Lee Home in Virginia,--Hampton, fine china, and

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a fine miniature of Davind Hunt, one of Andrew Jackson, an interesting silhouette of Dr. Mercer of Laurel Hill Plantation, possibly made at the time he was living in New Orleans where his fine old Mansion is now houses the Boston Club of that City.

Guests were leaving as Mr. Drake and I arrived, and we accordingly lingered for a few moments on the front gallery, looking down across the lovely park, ennobled by fine old oaks and stretching on to the woodland between the house and the bayou. It was on these steps, on an October day a number of years ago, that Mrs. Marshall, the present Mrs. Ward's mother was airing her winter clothes. Mr. Marshall, in a disturbed state of mind, sat on the steps, ~~xxx~~ ostensibly cleaning a revolver. As premeditated, he "accidentally" killed himself, which if one must kill himself, is probably about as clever a way to accomplish the business with assurance that the public will get the impression that the death was not ~~x~~ deliberate.

Perhaps the two most interesting bits of news I learned from Mrs. Ward as we sat along in the great drawing room while Mr. Drake and Mrs. Balfour conversed in the other were the two following:

Dr. Haller's famous Diary for some years was in the possession of his grandson, the eccentric Prentice Nutt of Washington. Some five months ago the storage company in Washington, D. C., sold Mr. Nutt's furniture and papers for unpaid charges. Prentice Nutt himself died about a month later. At the moment no one knows whence this collection went, and it is of course possible that the Diary along with other old documents might have been burned as rubbish along with other things which the untutored might consider as worthless. And thus we see the possible disappearance from the earth of a Diary which probably would have been of inestimable value to posterity had someone had sense enough to have had it copied.

The other item at which I pricked up my ears concerned certain drawings now housed at Longwood. Sloane of Philadelphia, who designed the house, drew sketches of how the house would look outside and the appearance of the various rooms inside. None of these, I believe have ever been published, and I have Mrs. Ward's promise that I may go with her one day later in the month to see these, and that we may borrow them to have them photographed.

Mrs. Ward gave me several papers concerning her grandfather or great grand father, David Hunt, including a list of all of his plantations, his slaves, the prices he paid for them, etc. It is my understanding that his slaves number 1,200, and probably constituted as large an ownership in this particular field as anyone in America.

Mr. Drake joined us, as did Mrs. Balfour shortly afterward, and it was interesting to speak with the lady who had lived so long at Homewood before the ~~aisers~~ and Swans. She intimated that she believe the fire had been of a deliberate nature to collect the insurance, which, of course, has not yet been paid after eight months of investigation by the fire insurance people.



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We left "andsdowne a little after six, and drove dir otly back to Edgewood where Mary was awaiting our coming. She served highballs to us, and to Bernince and her husband, who came in at that moment, too, as did Jeff who had just arrived from town also.

Mr. Drake left early, and dinner followed shortly, much to our regret that Magruder couldn't stay. After supper we chatted for a couple of hours,--Bernice and Newman sampling further highballs, although the rest of us declined. Just before leaving Bernince poured herself a final one,--final one because she dripped the bottle of whisky on the floor and all the contents ran out as she stood in surprise watching it gurgle out. A few minutes later, she and Newman drove back to Ferriday, La., and we all retired.

Sunday, Oct. 14th, 1940. page 1.

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Perfection still dominates the weather.

I awoke when Lou brought me my breakfast, and I day dreamed a while afterward, contented to do little else but breathe deeply of the fragrance from the gardenias in the glass vase in the form of a basket sitting on the console beside my bed, and looking out through the sun drenched frilledmuslin curtains away toward the deep blue of the sky and the deep green of the towering magnolia tree in the garden.

After a leisurely shower and shave, I drummed out a few pages on the side gallery, and for an hour or so before dinner chatted with Jeff and his brother in law who had come up from Greenwood.

Talk, for the most part, centered on whiskey, both bonded and boot-leg, as sold in the dry state of Mississippi, although its sale is so open in various liquor stores in Natchez itself that one frequently hears that place referred to as the independent State of Natchez.

After dinner, Mary, who had been riding in the morning, took a siesta, while I strolled down to the Presbyterian Church of Pine Ridge, and on my return found Mary looking spick and span and pleasantly refreshed, and ready to drive me down to Trinity Plantation. We clipped along at a brisk pace, twice passing flocks of pheasants in the traces,--one group of about fifteen and another of possibly ten. With the high walls on either side of these roads, the place seems particularly inept for such birds in open season.

We found Mr. and Mrs. Hazelip at home and were kindly received into the poverty stricken living room. Mrs. Hazelip had told me on Friday that she had always had a longing for new things,--new houses, new furniture, etc, and here she sat in this wonderful old dilapidated plantation home, obviously doing nothing to give any semblance of ~~it~~ tidyness to it, and even seemingly disdainful of the use of even an old broom. I felt sorry for poor r. Hazelip who obviously had other ideas but couldn't do anything about it. We touched on the nature of his old papers, but in view of their relation primarily to old tax receipts and deeds, I didn't explore them. Mrs. Hazelip, of course, sets no store on them, and told us they had gotten rid of the old ledgers, letters, etc. As for the old furniture in the house, she had been de ighted when Mrs. Barnum of Arlington had stopped by the house one day, offered to take the whole assortment of old chairs, beds, tables, etc., etc. Mrs. Hazelip thought she had done a good day's job in palming them off on Mrs. Barnum, even though the latter had immediately had them refinished and passed them off at Arlington as old family heirlooms, and even though Madam Hazelip herself hadn't gotten enough out of her transaction to get anything worth while that was new.



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From Trinity Plantation, we returned to Washington, by which we had come, and visited the Methodist Church in front of B. L. C. Wailes house. From its back windows we could see the poor people who live in the former home of Mississippi's most distinguished ante-bellum citizen. There were a raft of children of assorted ages on the front gallery.

From the Methodist Church, we turned off the main highway toward Dr. Monett's house, and on the top of the little rise of ground, some hundred feet, possibly from the main road, we stopped at the Baptist Church, frequently mentioned in B. L. C.'s Diary. It is a brick building, magnificently proportioned, in classic Greek lines, with lovely Louis XIV windows, most of which still harbor the original stationary blinds. I believe the old church may now house a school for colored children, although little of it seems to have been altered since the 1850's. The slave gallery seems to be still intact, while the beautiful windows at the far end and the little stair case to the rostrum still bear mute evidence of its former quiet elegance. Both Mary and I were crazy about the building, and congratulated each other on the fact that a lot of the neighboring cheap politicians had apparently overlooked this building when they needed bricks for pig pens or whatever.

Back home at Edgewood a little after five, we had a leisurely supper and about seven o'clock, Mary and Jeff and the boys drove me into Natchez, for I had decided to return to Elrose by bus on Monday morning and as the bus leaves at seven o'clock, I thought it kinder to mine hosts to depart the night before and so avoid the necessity of disturbing the household at some strange hour on the morrow. I wanted to get in touch with Mrs. Moore, too, whom I hoped might be in town, and as she isn't classed as an intimate at Edgewood, I thought it better to establish whatever rendezvous I could without discussing it with the Ambdins.

I had registered at the Eola Hotel by seven, after saying goodbye to my friends, and immediately telephoned Mrs. Moore. I was pleased to hear a voice respond, but disappointed to learn on giving my name and inquiring for Mrs. Moore to learn that she was out for supper and that there was not certainty when she might return. I asked if one might know where she was dining, in hopes that I might join her for a bite, when the voice ~~xx~~ reported complete ignorance on that point, but inquired again as to the identity of the caller. I explained again. Immediately the voice changed, and in a familar tone announce that "This is Edith. Of course I am home, and shall be delighted to spend the evening with you". Hummmmm. There is certainly a story behind that, I calculated and before the evening was done I found out. Look for the man, as some old French proverb didn't put it.

I skipped over to Commerce Street, and within ten minutes was chatting merrily with Mrs. Moore. She read me a chapter from her manuscript on Mary Jan, Her Sampler, a volume she is writing

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on the story of her grandmother as a child in the early 1800's. I was entertained, and found the story good, although, I suppose, one should never try to judge the value of a manuscript when read by the writer, although for sheer excellence of presentation no one can probably read it better than the one who composed it.

A little after nine, we decided to walk down to Burton's Restaurant for a couple of rounds of beer. Mrs. Moore, Christian and I had dined in this restaurant so often during the summer of 1839 (1939) that it seemed the most logical of all places for us two to go.

Mrs. Moore told me that she realized she had no ability to launch anything she ever wrote; that she had 134 notebooks of Natchez history, much of it from old records and much of it from oldsters of the town, long since dead. She wondered if I would like to do something ~~xxx~~ with this material for her, whip some of it into shape and possibly get the pertinent pieces into something which we agreed ~~xy~~ might be issued under the title of "My Natchez Scrap Book."

We talked of other things, other possible publications, and many many other things. It's amazing what a couple of bottles of beer will do on occasion.

We returned home about 12 o'clock. The night was warm and the moon magnificent. Natchez seemed so quiet as compared with other cities. "What a pity it will not always be that way."

Mrs. Moore ran through some Foster data,--wills, etc., which she had collected for me. She also felt moved to give me a recitation covering the high points of the lecture on Natchez which she give on tour every winter. That was alright, too, although slightly amusing, in view of the somewhat stilted style that seemed to cloth the piece, when delivered to an audience of one,--and more so, possibly, because she had moved her chair to the opposite end of the room from the sofa where I sat, to give her the feeling of distance and vastness of a large hall filled with people, I suppose.

About one o'clock we said goodnight, and I returned to the hotel and fell into bed.

I intended to mention earlier in today's Journal that after Mary and I had visited the Baptist Church in Washington this afternoon, we crossed the road to examine the monument,--a limestone obolisque, surrounded by a low iron fence on which was inscribed something in this vein: "The Rev. Whielan, born in England 82 years ago and died at Southdown Lodge in 1860."

Now, of course, I am wondering what and where Southdown Lodge might have been.



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Monday, Oct. 14th, 1940. page 1.

I was up and bathed and shaved before my telephone rang to tell me that it was six thirty.

I had a quick breakfast in the Coffee Shop of the Hotel, and then took a short turn up Main Street to Commerce, turning towards Franklyn, where in the middle of the block I noticed the old alleyway, down which I threaded my way, noting where the rear of those buildings facing Commerce adjoined the older brick buildings just behind them. These latter once formed the facade of Cotton Square, for here it was that in olden days the cotton market of the Natchez region was maintained in this open square, which then faced the now departed Catholic Church of earlier days.

Back to the Hotel, I checked out and so over to the bus station, and so headed home toward Melrose.

I must break my Journal at this point, however, to insert a story I heard yesterday regarding negro voting in Mississippi on thoroughly reliable authority. In Adams County a year or so ago a colored man registered at a voting place, where friends of mine participate in citizenly duties at election time. When the day came for cast ballots, a responsible colored man of the neighborhood appeared in the afternoon, and stated that he would like to vote. Thinking fast, the head of the white board replied: "Why, Sam, you have already voted today." to which the darkie responded that he had been out of the neighborhood that morning and had just returned in order that he might cast his ballot. I believe he has a farm in the neighborhood on which he lives. But the member of the Board again suggested that the would be voter think hard:-- "You remember, Sam. You certainly voted this morning, don't you remember?" to which the darkie responded: "Ah, yes sir. I just remember. I did vote this morning. Yes, sir. Thank you, sir." and tipping his hat withdraw. So that's the way the removal of the ~~tax~~ poll tax enabled the man of color to vote in Mississippi.

I had thought, after crossing the River, that I would send a wire to Aunt Cammie, telling her that I would be arriving at Montrose at two o'clock, but the Western Union office wasn't in open ~~yet~~ yet, as it wasn't nine o'clock as yet. I accordingly decided to send it from Jonesville. The bus driver stopped for me to do so, pointing out the private house which is the combined telephone and telegraph office there. I found three women sitting in what once was the front parlor of the depressing place. One was tatting, the other chatting local gossip, and the other fiddling about the switchboard. I gave them a telegram. The telephone operator took it, but couldn't figure out how much it would be. The gossip bag took a crack at the solution but got no further. Time marched on. Shortly the bus driver tooted his horn. I hoped he would drive off with out me, for then the telgram would have to be appreciably altered to fit quite a different piece of intelligence. Finally between the two panicky women, they hit upon a price. At this point they discovered that Melrose had no telegraph office, and that, as I had already explained to them, the message would have to be telephoned from Natchitoches

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The operator would accordingly have to telephone the nearest telegraph office to settle the new rates which might cover the case. I explained that there was no additional charge in the telephoning of the message from town to Melrose, but she wasn't going to take my word for it. She went ahead with the call. At this moment the bus started its engine and again tooted. The operator discovered that the office she was calling was busy at the moment. She flew off her perch before the board, ran to the window, threw it open, and screamed at the bus-driver that he simply would have to wait. I couldn't hear his response, but I was hoping he concurred. Again she tried to establish contact and again she received a busy signal. At this point, I said that to avoid nervous prostration for all of us, she might just send the message C. O. D. On this point she demurred. I started to fly out of the place at this point, but just as I reached the bus, the operator again cried from the window that the price would be so much and that it wouldn't cost anything to telephone the message from town. Neither of these bits of information might be classed as news, and so I tossed her a half dollar, leaped into the bus, and amid loud cheers from the other passengers, we were on our way again. By noon we were in Alexandria and by two o'clock I was at Melrose where Caliste and her mother were waiting for me.

On reaching Melrose, I said goodbye to them at the front gate, and with ut seeing Frank or anyone made my way to the big house.

I found Aunt Cammie in bed, where she had been down with malaria since last Friday. She seemed so tired, and yet somehow could make me realize that she was glad I was home again. I was glad, too.

The vast quantities of quinine and whatnot were in full operation and so after a few moments I tucked the covers around her and went about my little tour of my house and Lyle's where in both places I found lovely bouquets of dahlias which Ita, at the Adam's direction had placed them. I was good to be home.

I got into some old clothes, in anticipation of visiting the gin to watch the cotton bales come tumbling out, but before I had on my shoes, Frank arrived with coffee and a little lunch. He seemed as happy to see me as last time, and I certainly was enchanted to see him. It's curious how much Melrose, Aunt Cammie and the darkies, mean by way of making everything in Louisiana seem worth while.

Forsoaking the gin, I devoted the rest of the afternoon to my typewriter, for correspondence was sagging dreadfully and I was running behind in my Journal. I sat for an hour with Aunt Cammie after supper, and before eight I was back at my typewriter, where I remained until nine thirty. Thence to my fireside with a glass of iced coca-cola, and grandpa on my lap, and thence to bed and to sleep.



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Tuesday, Oct. 15th, 1940.

It was grand to feel Frank approaching Lyle's house a little before six o'clock this morning, to hear the click of the picket gate, and his step on the birch pavement of the front gallery. Coffee never tasted better, it seemed, and the chill in the early morning air, and the gray clouds, so different from the seemingly endless of blue dawns made home seem more precious than ever.

At breakfast I got caught up a little on my radio news casts, which I had somehow let slip by during the past several days. There wasn't so very much that was different,--Nazi's bombing London, and British bombing the Continent, Roosevelt leading Wilke in sample polls, and further airing of corrupt acts of Long appointees in Louisiana.

I got out a flock of mail before ten when I had my coffee with Aunt Cammie who remains in bed, although seeming much brighter today.

We ran over the mail together, and I returned to my machine to hammer out a lot of joint letters for her to mutual friends.

I worked pretty steadily after dinner, too, but I broke off shortly when I heard the dinner bell ringing violently. Glancing at the clock I noticed that it was only 4:30, and I bolted out the door and to the big house, fearing that something had gone wrong with our patient. But there all seemed calm, and in view of Aunt Cammie's suggestion that she give supper a little earlier than 5:30, Mary had stepped it up to half past four, which, I guess was early enough, since she never gets aound to give breakfast much before 7:30, and one may easily get a little hollow in between times.

I sat with Aunt Cammie until eight, talking of things Natchez, and receiving her a probation for bounty brought home from Natchez in the form of family trees, original ante-bellum papers, etc.

It was so light from the full moon that when I had said good night and started across the garden, I could easily see grandpa and little grandpa come galloping across the borders of Firate's beard and ascension lilies to make Lyle's house as soon as I.

I sat long before my glowing fire place. It was ten before I undressed and eleven before I slept. The gray clouds of the day had dissolved at sunset, and now the white garden was all silvered by the full moon. I could hear an animal, possibly a horse, champing in the cotton field far beyond the screen of bamboo and banana plants. Save only this, and all was still. Half asleep, I remembered for the first time in years the faint melody of an old popular tune, the words of which ran something like this:  
"They built a little garden for the rose, and they called it  
Dixieland.

"They made it warm and in nice to keep the snow and ice far away  
from Dixie land.

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Tuesday, Oct. 15th, 1940. - page 2.

"The made the finest home I know, when they built my home sweet home,--  
Nothing was forgotten in that land of cotton from the sugar to the  
honeycomb.

And then they took an angel from the skies, and they gave her  
heart to me,

They put a little heaven in her eyes, just as blue and blue could be.  
The got the best "pring chickens in the land, they taught old "ammy  
how to use the frying pan,

They made it twice as nice as Paradise, and they called it Dixieland".

Gabriel on his trumpet was the only one who could out class that  
melody of memory at that moment. And Gabriel didn't come.

MBJ



711

Wednesday, Oct. 16th, 1940.

Another all blue and gold edition of so many flawless days.

I was up and in the big road before the sun, with a little packet of sandwiches Frank had made for me to substitute for a breakfast which would have kept me from reaching far along the Montrose lane before the "big" day was up. I sat on the little railing of Bayou Brevelle and ate one, sharing the other with an old darkie from down Cane River way who knew me of course, although I had never seen him before.

This is the day 16,400,000 Americans register for voluntary draft service, a date, I suppose which will long be remembered as instituting another step in the development of public duty in a democracy when necessity and alarm from disturb the quiet of international affairs.

I wanted to visit a polling place to see how the business was handled. I dropped by St. Mary's colored school where the colored population was being registered,--youths from 21 to 36. I saw many of my colored friends there, although I didn't recognize the white people who were delegated to fill out the cards. I suppose election officials in most places in the United States do this work, but as the colored people here don't vote, I suppose the white man from behind Montrose who was just arriving as I did, may not have been one of the regular election board members. I hope not.

The first man of color this number of the draft board undertook to register, said in response to a question, that he had been born in Natchitoches.

The white man struggled with a pen to set down this fact. He hesitated a few moments, scrawled something, and then tore the card up. He made a second attempt. Again he didn't get any further. He tore that one up. Taking a third one, he rather sheepishly said: "By God, I was born in Natchitoches Parish, too, but I'll be damned if I can spell it." The colored man spelled it for him.

We certainly must be careful to guard our white superiority.

Home before eleven, I chatted with Aunt Cammie for a few moments. She is still in ed, but better, I believe. We talked local doings, and I learned for the first time that Bill Jones' wife had died last Friday. Poor Bill. Aunt Cammie said she understood the funeral was large. She said J. H. attended.

In the afternoon, after accomplishing a few things on my machine, I ran over to Zeline's, to deliver the large pieces of pretty fabrics which Mary Lambdin had sent along by me for Zeline, whom she thought might like to make use of them for bed quilts or some other purpose. Zeline was enchanted. She talked at length of Aunt Cammie, Robina, Mary and Lyle. Poor old Zeline, always so ready to chuckle and to radiate good. I'll bet hers will be a big star when she knocks at the Early Gates.

On my way back home, I stopped at the saloon to talk about port wine with Bill. He had a good grade, I was glad to find, as Aunt Cammie had mentioned it as a possibility to step up her appetite.

712

Thursday, October 17th, 1940.

The perfect weather still holds,--no clouds, just all blue and gold.

I spent the entire day at home, dividing my time between my typewriter and beside Aunt Cammie's bed where the malaria keeps her pinned down, although nothing seems to restrain her gaiety of spirit.

The postman brought us a flock of mail, including excellent clippings from Manhattan and magazines and books, which under the circumstances mean more to Aunt Cammie and me than a library from elsewhere.

There was also a letter from Porto Rico, which, because of the distinctive handwriting, Aunt Cammie had difficulty in making out in its entirety. I was struck by these two facts: the boy friend's kitten had fallen 7 stories and had not been hurt. The second item which impressed me that he had just received his pilot's license, which means, I suppose, that he will be driving his own airplane from this point on.

The matter of the fallen kitten was not in the bracket of news, since it had already been called to my attention, both in Melrose and in Natchez, some two or three weeks back at the time German bombs were flying from French channel ports to erase the city of London, and Free Frenchmen, under de Gaulle, were trying to take Dakar in West Africa.

There was also mail from Windy Hill Manor,--so characteristic of Miss Elizabeth that I am attaching a copy of it to today's Journal. Aside from its other distinctive features, I am struck by these points:--a continuation of Miss Elizabeth's determination to focus events in the light she prefers, regardless of actualities, as is evidenced in her inference that I made a 150 mile trip from Melrose to Natchez just to congratulate her on her birthday, and secondly, her subtle announcement to the world that Windy Hill Manor is now in touch with the outside world by radio. This feature is certainly an innovation for forgotten Windy Hill Manor, and if news had trickled through by air waves ten or eleven years ago, I suppose she might have realized the ineptitude of composing her musical composition, "Kill the Kaiser", in 1929.

Living in a remote Manor House, two miles from the public road, and isolated in a vast forest of trees, and seven miles from the nearest city,--Natchez,--which for half a century remained 40 miles from the nearest paved road, Miss Elizabeth comes down to us, along with her sisters, Miss Maude and Miss Beatrice as completely distilled in a world of unreality and dreams as one is likely to find. And with their passing, their duplicates will not be found, I suppose, in America, for with the onrush of transportation and communication facilities, distinguished daughters of a distinguished and historic house will never be so distantly removed from the world in which they move as though part of it, but in reality are nothing but shadows of another age they have projected into this.



Migon Journal,  
October 17th, 1940.  
for inclusion with <sup>Journal</sup> Daughters of the Crown Stationery

(Copy)

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Historic Windy Hill Manor  
October 8<sup>th</sup> 1940

Dear Aunt Cammie:

I am so delighted to hear that your health is improving and that you have returned home again to your home so lovely "Historic Melrose" - so noted for being the distinguished honored "Mother of the literati", which you have truly won by your long unselfish encouragement, to our Southland's authors and particularly indispensable to the achievements of their best and successful "Brain Children" debut in the world of letters.

I was all despair that I was disabled by quite a serious attack, from having the much appreciated greatly valued, unexpected pleasure of welcoming the unique personality of Monsieur Mignon and Mrs. Mary Lambden one of our most admired, treasured friends, who came to celebrate my birthday. She is ever welcome to our home. She is by lineage and birth and beauty a truly inherited, most distinguished ancestress of our old anti-bellum South, interwoven with age old Natchez and possesses and is chatelaine of celebrated "Edgewood", house owner renowned for hospitality, genuine Southern hospitality. Just as it was in days of the long ago, now only a legend unfortunately of our lamented southern grand dames of those ever to be regretted days of yesterdays, so long ago, so regretted.

My sisters said Monsieur Mignin was looking so well evidently in much improved health! I was so disappointed that I could not enjoy his welcome visit. It was so kind and thoughtful of him to come all that long distance to visit us; and I assure you it would have been a great treat to me to meet so elegant and refined a gentleman, a native of "La Belle France". I am awfully depressed by this bombing of London by those cruel, merciless Nazis, listening through out the day the radio description of the ruins they have wrought to London. During the reign of Charles 1st, King of England, Sir Francis Chaplin was Lord Mayor of London from whom my mother, nee Iome Chaplin was descended on the male line. Her American English ancestor King's Councillor representing the King as his Councillor, Isaac Chapetone was sent, 1610, to represent his majesty on the "House of Burgesses on the Ship Star" recorded in Horton's Old History of Ye Old Virginia. Her father General Moses W. Chapline, 1st Mayor of Wheeling, Va., entertained that hero the Marquess de Lafayette when after the Revolutionary war he revisited America. I have in my family archives the description of that memorable occasion. Mother has many ancestral lines of distinction interwoven with England and France. My father with England, Stanton Hall, Natchez, is a replica of our home in Europe, &c, &c. It was build by grandfather's brother. I have sufficient records of our Stanton, Chaplin, Brandon, etc. with coats of arms, etc. to fill a volume of authoritative records.

I wanted to write you about the wonderful birthday Oct. 8th, which my precious sisters celebrated in my behalf, but I am nervous. Take that awful blot for a kiss from me, wish it was truly

Mignon diary,  
October 17th, 1940.  
#2 for inclusion in Journal

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a kiss, beautiful, darling Aunt Cammie for I love you dearly and hope to see you soon enjoying good health.

The government is plowing up the full belled cotton on my plantation, don't allow tenant to plant but five acres in cotton. Think of that! How are cotton planters to live, ~~seven~~ tenants ~~to~~ only allowed to plant five acres in cotton.

God bless you, precious Aunt Cammie! Just as soon as possible. By the way, the iris named "Melrose" is flourishing, that you so kindly sent me. With love from my Sisters and self

Elizabeth Brandon Stanton.

I write this postscript to say that I consider this a remarkable letter from a 93 or 94 old Southern Belle of the finest Natchez tradition.

*Robina*



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Friday,  
October 18th, 1940.

Another fine day, with the air cool enough to be invigorating and yet warm enough to remain in shirtsleeves, and to have all the windows and doors open in all the houses as fires burn lazily in the several fireplaces.

I took a little exercise when breakfast was finished and the out-going mail was out of the way, and on the way home, I stopped at the gin again to see the torrents of white foam come tumbling out into the press.

The in-coming mail was good again today, nice letters from near and far and publications ranging from the latest American Guide,--the Mississippi Gulf Coast to a copy of the unpublished Diary kept by Judge Rodney covering a trip made in 1804 from Washington, Miss., to Fort Adams (near Woodville) and back.

Aunt Cammie felt so much better she was up and dressed when I called to take ten o'clock coffee with her. She announced her determination to come down stairs today, but the servants and I ganged up on her and she finally consented to remain up-stairs for one day longer, which must seem endless after having been flat on her back for a week.

Two or three times during the day I visited her and together we talked over plans for culling material from Natchez. We talked over recent doings in that place, too, such as the relations of Mrs. Dave McKitterick with one Robert Graham.

Mrs. McKitterick was a Surget, one of the old families of Natchez. I believe one of the earliest ones in the Natchez region was arrested several times in the first quarter of the 1800's for rape. Perhaps the family is better remembered because they lived at Clifton, the magnificent home on the bluffs, at the opposite end of the old parade grounds, at the other end of which Rosalie still stands. Clifton was famous for its beauty, both within and without, and its fabulous gardens on the Mississippi side stepped down in graduated terraces toward the river. The Surget's property was always rather extensive, even after the Yankee's fury had been appeased by the blowing up of Clifton during the occupation of Natchez in 1864. In the beginning of the 1900's, Gloucester, the old Winthrop Sargent home, was Surget property, and here the Surget family of that era begot among their other off-spring, a young woman who married Dave McKitterick of Baton Rouge, and together they lived at Elmscourt, where Dave still lives with one daughter and some of his grandchildren.

Some years ago Mrs. McKitterick became enamoured with Bob Graham, a handsome man of Under-the-Hill tendencies, if not of birth in that dubious locality. Graham was a vigorous man and his manners and language was today better known for their strength than for their decency. Dave's wife divorced her husband sometime during her infatuation for Graham, and Graham promised to get rid of his wife, too, but he never did. Graham was interested in money and Mrs. McKitterick had it, and whether he ever cared for the lady or not,--her money talked, and Graham got a large slice of it.

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In a way, I don't see why Mrs. McKitterick ever bothered to get a divorce, for even after she had received it, life went on much as before, with the extra-marital relations continuing as between her and Graham and with prolonged weekends spent by the former Mrs. McKitterick with her husband of yesteryear at Elmscourt.

Bob took for himself a property across the River in Louisiana, down below Vidalia where the swamps begin and the travel is difficult, except for one who knows the roads by heart. Here he lives in an old shack, surrounded by other shacks, and rumor for a long time has had it that he harbors gangsters of the South West when the law bears down a little too heavily upon their trail.

Two or three years ago, there were a series of robberies of imposing proportions in Alabama, during one of which a gangster was shot. The whole band, however, escaped. A little later the body of the one who had been wounded was found beside the cement highway not far from Jena in Louisiana, some miles from the river. The law descended on Bob Graham's place in search of the other members of the mob. The gangsters had disappeared when the law, after carefully threading its way through the elusive bypaths, finally reached the Graham place. But even though the mob had departed, the law did find plenty of rounds of ammunition, sawed-off shot guns, machine guns, medical supplies and even a trained nurse, whose presence was explained in some bland manner but not very convincingly.

Bob was indicted for harboring criminals but the case never came to trial. Someone told me in Natchez last week that he had seen Bob the other day and had quite a chat with him. He is now sixty or more, and seems not a day over forty. Mrs. McKitterick is still fascinated by Graham. It appears she will even outdo her mother who a few years ago infuriated Natchez by revealing at her death in her 80's that in reality she had been married for years to her pseudo secretary, some sixty years her junior, when everyone had supposed,--and didn't seem to mind,--that they never had been to the altar. The old lady's young husband, Mr. Stanton,--a newpew of Miss Elizabeth, remarried after his ancient wife's demise, choosing a sweetheart he had known in New Orleans, and together they now occupy distinguished old Gloucester.

"I declare", Aunt Cammie remarked, laughingly, "those Natchez people are certainly extraordinary. As father would say: 'They certainly take the rag off the bush'".



Saturday, Oct. 19th, 1940.

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Indian summer still rides high.

Still Indian Summer, with a fresh breeze from the South-West, brining no suggestions of clouds with it, save for the dust which starts up easily along the roads, so long without rain.

It was good to find Aunt Cammie down stairs this morning, and headed for Summer Quarters when I returned from the store with the mail.

We worked until noon together, and after dinner company interrupted our joint labors for a time, during which interim, I continued with the help of Buddy in arranging the translucent screen before the great fan light in Winter Quarters, with a view of cutting the light to a subdued tone so as to enhance the value of the magnificent old stained glass set in the windows below.

We resumed our labors from two until four o'clock, hammering away at the records of the Nutt family and the good deeds of David Hunt, large luminaries in a century which glistened with in the first half of the 19th century across the great South West. I wonder if it was the clouds of War which blotted out the extraordinary luster these men added to the American scene, or was it this smoke of battle plus sectional prejudice, plus a rising light of gold and physical heroisms of the West that totally eclipsed these remarkable souls from the place they should have held in the minds of the world that followed after them.

After supper, we read for an hour or so from an unpublished diary kept by Judge Rodney in 1804 when he made a nine day journey from Washington, Miss., across the opulent plantation country to Woodville, (Fort Adams,-- and hence back to Washington, Miss.

In this simple document, I was struck by a number of points he made. It was strange to read in this early date,--1804,--of the old deserted farms he found along the lower Woodville road, indicating, as study of that section indicates, that it always seems to have been old, yet forever springing into new life and beauty.

He spoke of visiting Colonel Anthony Hutchins in his home,-- Glen Rubin, where Mary and I had been so short a time ago to find it now harboring six colored families. He also mentioned several prominent people he met on the road, including Dr. McCreary, of Roseland plantation, where I had also wandered far afield,--a week ago yesterday, I guess, and found the old McCreary Place,--now belonging to Mrs. Ayres of Belmont, still intact.

I was delighted that the Judge stopped off at Sir William Dunbar's plantation,--The Forrests, some 10 miles below Natchez. He jokingly questioned Sir Williams seeming exquisite hospitality, by remarking that as he arose from Sir William's table after dinner, he was thumped mightily on the head by Sir William's "fanning machine",--indicating that the punks was doing business early in this region.

At eight we said goodnight and before nine I slept.

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Sunday, Oct. 20th, 1940.

Indian Summer continues to dominate our days. So often people have spoke of it as "lingering on", and I suppose I have too, like a florid pageant which has past a reviewing stand and visibly slows up its pace, reluctant to forego a fleeting heyday. But this Indian Summer isn't like that, but rather more like an Imperial Durbar, glittering and resplendent, which has arrived with natural determination to remain indefinitely on a stage which, with glittering tappings of brilliancy and unquestioned vigor, it will remain undisputed master of the clauder indefinitely.

But I passed up the free sunshine vitamins which streamed from the heavens from dawn to dusk, content to remain at my typewriter, and observe the royal progress of the season as I glanced from time to time at the shimmering white garden beyond my window.

Aunt Cammie came over for an hour or so in the morning, and together we worked on Hunt and Nutt data until Puny arrived with coffee. In years Puny is a little older now than he was when his picture was taken to be included in the illustrations for Roll, R Jordan, Roll, but in appearance he is just the same Puny.

Puny  
While Aunt Cammie drank her tomato juice and I punished a couple rounds of demi-tasse, Puny stood with his back to the fireplace, laughing and talking about current doings on the plantation and reminiscing with Aunt Cammie about the good old days, when some 38 years back, Miss Leodovine used to stroll down to Puny's house with J. H., then a baby, and how Puny and his twin, Crook, as children of two or three used to throw their arms around J. H.'s neck and kiss him roundly, they as black children, thought him so pretty, and how mad little J. H. used to get, and how everybody laughed, etc., etc.

Aunt Cammie never appears better than at such moments when talking with the darkies about the gay times that have gone before and the hilarious antics of this one and that down the parade of years. Standing erect, and looking spick and span in his neatly pressed sky-blue trousers and fresh blue shirt, Puny giggled and laughed at Aunt Cammie's sallies, contributed a few confidences about doings on the plantation and somehow glowed with that same admiration and adoration which so many of the darkies have for the mistress of Melrose.

The mere fact that Puny had brought us coffee was in itself a flag flying in the breeze which indicates, possibly, one of the distinctive qualities of Melrose found in no other plantation I know. It somehow confirmed that Melrose owned Puny and Puny owned Melrose, that each was a part of the other and that the relationship between Melrose as an economic unit and Puny as a worker in that scheme, but rather it seemed that everything and everybody about Melrose was an integral part of a tree of life, and whether chance made you the trunk of that tree, its roots, or merely a twig or a leaf,--still each



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individual unit was a definite part of the other, and somehow blood course through the veins of all, not so much from the economies involved but rather by an absence of any such feeling smothered by a sense that the existence of one was all intertwined with the other, and regardless of standards and barriers which divided the individual units on other plantations, at Melrose there was no division, since each was a part of the other.

I know of few plantations where the darkies hang about the store on their free days at they do at Melrose. Puny for example lives down the lane, hard by Cane River, and probably has things to do at home or little amusements to take up his time on Sundays if Melrose in the morning of the Sabbath were not so satisfying to him and so much of a habit.

All week long Puny works in the field, supervising the haypressing under the orders of the overseer, or at such times as these, running the machinery of the cotton gin from morning until night. But let Sunday dawn, and a day of leisure be his, and Puny turns up at Melrose, and for some reason, and by common consent carried to such a degree that the fact is never considered, Puny, instead of Frank or Mary or Aita of Sam or any of the other servants about the house, prepares the coffee tray, serving first the store, and then the big house, and lastly,--I hope because he likes to linger longer, he seeks out the Madam and me for a round of small talk on plantation memoirs, and so disappears for the rest of the day, although if he ever leaves the place, other than to do a little gambling at home, I know not.

After guests arrived at eleven, Aunt Cammie departed, leaving me to a stack of correspondence and Journal on which I worked until dinner time, and then resumed immediately afterward.

The balance of my day was prosaic enough, save for one contact made by a youth who sought my advice on a point of procedure. He is an old friend of mine, 20 years old, huge, and black as ebony. He told me that night before last he had been at dalliance with a girl of 14 when the latter's mama surprised them and told him he must marry the girl. He didn't want, but merely retired from the scene, returning to the adjoining Parish where he lives. Worried about steps the girl's parents might take to force the marriage through, he had consulted a lawyer in town, who told him that for fifteen dollars, he could effect a compromise, but dollars are scarce for this youth, who probably earns 50 or 75 cents a day, and even though he is a sober, steady worker, fifteen dollars accumulate slowly. On Saturday night he had worried about what he should do, and so today he had thought to ask my advice.

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Of all things a man can give, I suppose advice is the one most generously and most easily handed out with lavish hand,--since it costs the giver nothing.

And so I handed out mine, advising him to absent himself from the Parish where he had been taken unawares, and to stay away from town where the lawyer, so expert at fifteen dollar compromises, plied his trade. My idea was millions for defense but no fifteen dollars for tribute, and the youth was on his way, saying that a load was off his mind, and swinging out of the garden in a manner that gave every indication that he felt out of jail even before the possibility of them looming before him,--I suppose I mean the jail bars,--had evaporated.

I worked along on my Journal until five o'clock, after which I joined the people in the big house for supper, and after the guests were gone and Aunt Cammie and I had made a tour of the gardens, we sat in her room until 7:30, running through Jefferson County documents, and especially matters dealing with the ghost town of Rodney, and its lovely birch church. One point made in these documents had to do with David Hunt. When the church was built by subscription of its several members, it was found on completion that there was still a building deficit of one thousand five hundred dollars. David Hunt quietly paid this sum. Later, in considering means for paying the operating expenses of the church, the minister's salary, etc., the board of the church hit upon the idea of renting the pews. David Hunt was opposed to this idea. But the board won out, and so David Hunt rented all the pews himself, thus making the seats free to all the worshippers.

It was interesting, too, that when the Presbyterian Church was first organized in the roaring river port of Rodney in the 1820's, the Sunday School was held in a bar room. The owner would ring the dinner bell at church time, wipe off the wine stains from the tables, and the church would get under way, in this building, the first of which was a house of prostitution, I believe. Home at eight.

I sat before my fire at Ayle's until ten. It's grand to be alone, even though one is lonely as the night wears on.



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Monday, Oct. 21st, 1940.

Perfections is still the order of the atmosphere.

I arose at six, got a lot of work done before ten, visited the gin and picked up the mail before having coffee with Aunt Cammie who is up and about in spite of a tiresome Sunday. She looks so tired, and yet her gaiety is so effervescent that one is always a little confused by the true character of her health. It appears so often that neither she nor any of her off-spring have any idea as to how one ought to be a patient, and holding her down, once she is able to more is a task too great for any force I know.

In the mail came a note from "Ellie Wailes Brandon, saying that she would be glad to run over from "atchez for a little visit on Wednesday. I responded by telegram that a week from Tuesday might be more favorable as I would be in "atchez this week-end, and that we might return together to Melrose, and after her visit, she, Aunt Cammie and I might drive over to "atchez together, and so do Washington and a lot of places around Pine Ridge and Church Hill together, along with Gerard Brandon.

Both in the morning and in the afternoon, Aunt Cammie and I labored on Natchez region plantation houses, listing half a hundred or more that I want to go over with Edith Wyatt Moore on Friday night. That poor lady is going to swoon if she ever realizes how big a piece of pie ~~amx~~ I am slicing out for her in the line of research.

Aunt Cammie and I talked at length about things "atchez. We ran across the will of St. John Elliott who left a large estate including Devereux provisionally to a ~~nephew~~ nephew or in the event of default on the youths failure to comply with certain provisions, to a "atchez Orphanage. This ~~ex~~ brought up the matter of the Marshalls who had lived at Devereux at one time, and later at Richmond, and the suit for divorce which Mr. Marshall had instituted against his wife, who had begot one child by him, -- "evin Marshall, and two mulatto children by her coachman, conceived, according to the Court records, at Devereux. This recalled to my mind that according to Miss Corinne "Anderson, who was a prominent belle of "atchez at the time--the 1880's, as to how the gentry of "atchez had reacted to this scandal. According to Miss Corinne, the ladies arose en masse, and each, enthroned in her carriage, and her colored coachman before, drove to the Marshall home to proclaim to the world, by this courtesy call, that the Adams County aristocracy stood as solidly behind any member of that charmed circle, regardless of proof presented in court and admissions by the lady in question, that Adams County Aristocracy held fast regardless. I'll bet the "resbyterian Church rang to the belfry on Sundays during those moving days, and the hymn of the gilded heirarchy ran no doubt along this line: "How firm a foundation, ye "aints of the Lord, etc., etc., etc."

I saw Edward. He told me of a great fright poor old "eline had on Saturday. St. Ange, and ~~amx~~ oldster whom Zeline and Joe are

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Monday, Oct. 21st, 1940 - page 2.

are now harboring, in exchange for labor on the little place which they cannot perform;--this Saint Ange was engaged in the chore of taking a bath on Saturday night about six o'clock when a blaze in his section of the cabin broke out in the wall, the inside of which was cardboard backing the outside of weather board, and ran to the ceiling in a flash. He called out to Edward who had just returned from the cistern with a bucket of water to perform his own ablutions, shouting for him to put out the fire. With one deft slosh, Edward spread the water high and wide, blotting out the blaze and at the same time soaking poor old St.-Ange's Sunday clothes which he had laid out in preparation to attending the mission being held at the Church.

Zeline, at the time in the rear of the house, heard St. Ange's call for help, ran into the house, but stood transfixed as she contemplated the steaming cardboard and contemplated the destruction which might have befallen her had Edward's marksmanship proved less expert.

Edward said they believe a rat had ~~ex~~ dragged a match in between the wall, and was there nibbling on it when the head ~~ex~~ ignited and set the blaze going. Fortunately no damage was done, save to poor Zeline's heart which didn't get back into its regular beat for a good half hour.

In the evening we read from Jefferson County, Miss., unpublished records on old plantations such as Gayosa, Woodlawn, etc., etc.

We said goodnight at eight and I was asleep before 10:30



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Tuesday, Oct. 22nd, 1940. page 1.

As happy a day as I am likely to experience, even though the songs which I might sing of it must forever go unsung.

It was chill when Frank arrived at six, but the sky was a dominate silver, carrying the promise of solid blue for another 24 hours.

After coffee, I bathed and dressed, picked up a little package of breakfast Frank had made for me, and started in the direction of the big road. I walked as far as Cypress, some 7 or 8 miles, and then returned to Melrose just before the 10 o'clock mail arrived.

I was so happy to see Aunt Cammie feeling gay, even though the absence of her corpuses slows down her activities to almost normal activities in the average person.

We ran through the mail,--or rather soaked ourselves in it, for there were several pieces and all were grand.

A letter from Robina indicating that she was keenly in tune with the glorious weather, and enjoying outside suppers in one back garden and another in Shreveport these days.

A letter from Levis, saying that she had received letters from Dolph, who has been promoted to a lieutenantcy in the Nazi Army.

A letter from Nellie Giles Brandon saying she would be delighted to return from Matchez to Melrose with me next Tuesday. And a notice which made my heart sink in regard to Gayosa.

A letter from Mary Lambdin, with a subtle piece of flattery which I relished because she said that thanks to me, I had helped her to see a lot in the old plantation houses. She also enclosed a clipping of the destruction of Gayosa which she and I had visited in May. I think I mentioned our visit in my Journal at that time, probably the 13th or 14th of May,--the lovely old mangled park in front of Gayosa, the splendid double gallery that ran across its entire front, the kindly Mr. Fonda who had taken down the extravagant old plantation home of Silas Went to restore Gayosa, and how pathetically had been his tone when he spoke so lovingly of the old place and how his wife hated it, of the exquisite fan light over the entrance with the rays of the spreading fan spindles between the separate piece or panes of glass being broken in their spreading line by a circular inset of glass in each expanding line, of the deliciously simple yet imposing medallions of plaster in the center of each ceiling in the rooms, and the great mantle pieces which were a marvel in carving and craftman's creation of the late 1700's or early 1800's. And now to learn that all this has gone up in flames, and another distinguished old plantation home has evaporated into the ether just as completely as the civilization which made their original creation and maintenance possible.

There was a further pathetic note added to the first notice Mary enclosed. It was the notice of a forced sale of cows, chickens, a parlor suit which had been saved from the fire, and other items to be gotten rid of in the final dispersal of what little remained undestroyed.

Tuesday, Oct. 22nd, 1940 - page 2.

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What little remained of Gayosa. Curiously enough, I thought of the reading Aunt Cammie and I had done last night, particularly in reference to Villa Gayosa and Gayosa in our pursuit of historic landmarks in Jefferson County.

Mary also spoke of the vast quantities of wild geese she had noted during the past few days in their southward migration of the season. She said she counted 53 in one flock, flying so low they awakened her in the early morning. She mentioned the possibility that their passage indicated the possible advent of cold weather. I suppose it does, and yet the glorious Indian Summer maintains its hold, seemingly as though it were to last for always.

And then there was a hilarious letter from Lyle, containing a flock of unbelievable particulars about the strange doings of his panicky Aunts, who Heaven knows are old enough to know better than to give away their furniture, sell their house and move away from Baton Rouge, only to follow their departure a few days later by a letter from somewhere,--Texas, I suppose,--that they had just discovered they had made a mistake and were coming back to Baton Rouge.

Lyle also spoke of having run up to Feliciana Parish some days back. He called on Miss Eva Scott at the shades and found her in good form, he said, whopping and hollering in the barn, and full of as much energy as ever. Percy Bell, her maitre d'hotel in overalls, black as the ace of spades and father of 17 children, had just had another child. The proud father named this latest offspring Seldom,--a choice which puzzled Lyle.

He said he had also stopped at Lovely Asphodel to see Miss Kate and Miss Sarah Smith, whom we had visited,--Aunt Cammie Robina, Lyle and I earlier in the Spring. He found Miss Kate looking extremely ill, asking that Aunt Cammie come to see her, and it appeared to Lyle that she was on the threshold of another and I trust a happier world.

In Miss Sarah, he found a recent sufferer from a fall in which she had gravel injured her leg. She had had the Dr. come to fix her up and the latter had put her leg in a plaster cast, and told her she must keep it in the cast for 8 weeks. At the expiration of the first week, however, Miss Sarah had developed other ideas. And so when Miss Kate wasn't about, she had taken an old pair of rusty shears and cut and hacked the cast off, and instructed a little colored girl to take it way out in the woods and throw it away.

To Lyle, however, she confided, that she had paid the little colored girl five cents to take care of this old thing according to her directions but that the girl was so trifling, she now thought that instead of concealing it in the woods, she had just thrown it out in the Smith girl's cemetery on the place. Sweet Asphodel,--perhaps the most beautifully proportioned plantation house ever erected in ante-bellum days. What a pity this mellowed, dilapidated old mansion should be permitted to slip into disintegration, and what a shame that these faded Southern belles,--Miss Kate and Miss Sarah, now whiter than the white washed walls of the old mansion should have lingered on so long into another age where few can sense their part in the tattered fabric of a departed civilization and none can put them back in again.



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Tuesday, Oct. 22nd, 1940 - page 3.

Aunt 'ammie came over for a little while after dinner, and together we listed plantations,--some 40 or 50 which I want to explore and record, along with their distinguished builders and subsequent owners.

Joe came by after school and read for a little, gathered some soft shelled pecanes for me from beneath the tree hard by Lyle's house. After he had gone, I spent the balance of the afternoon in hammering away at my typewriter. I saw Gabriel also and Tony dropped by, and the hours slid by with unaccountable swiftness.

After supper Aunt 'ammie and I continued our purusit of Jefferson County, Miss., historic data, and at eight we both retired to our various undertakings,--with the typewriter eventually coming in for another going over, as I struck off a couple of letters which I should not be able to knock off before the postman arrives on the morrow.

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for Mignon Journal, Oct. 22nd, 1940.

Gayoso Plantation House,--a description from

Source Material from Mississippi History,

Jefferson County, vol. 1.

Gayoso, Home of Everard Green, was first known as Carb Orchard place.

The Gayoso house on highway 61 is not the original home, built by Governor Manuel Gayoso, but a more modern home, built by Everard Green about 1838.

(according to Elsie Chamberlain, Cammonsburg, Miss.)

The first Villa Gayoso, built by Governor Gayosom in 1780 as a summer residence and fortified by a stockade was situated on the Bluffs plantation, overlooking the River bottoms, about 3 miles from Highway 61.

It had a Spanish Garrison, and there was a Catholic Church, a priest's house, and a school maintained there for the soldiers' and settlers' children.

After the evacuation by the Spaniards, Everard Green took possession, and it was here that the Franklin Society was established for "the acquisition of useful knowledge". Edward Turner, then a citizen of Pickering County, addressed the first meeting of the Society.

At Gayoso Fort also were held the first Courts of Pickering County before the establishment of a County Seat at Huntston.

In later years, the old Spanish Bluffs Road from Hatcher was abandon, and the Hatcher Trace became the main thoroughfare.

The Green family then built the new home on the Eastern front of the property and the old Fort buildings fell into ruin. At this time there is nothing to indicate the original position of the Fort, but we are told that the structures were on the brow of the Bluffs in a location now occupied by a small cottage and blacksmith shop. The Bluffs holdings are now in the possession of the Truly family.

The second Gayoso house, built about 1838, is a huge two and a half story home, situated on a gentle elevation surrounded by moss fringed oak trees. It was once one of the finest homes in the County and the scene of numbers of brilliant gatherings.

It is built on the Southern ante-bellum plan, with wide porches back and front, each faced with six square columns. The woodwork in Gayoso is especially interesting, the exterior is of wood but paneled in squares to resemble blocks of stone. The door frames were beauti-



page 2 - Gayoso.

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tifully moulded, and in the huge hallway, the same design is carried out in the door frames, and a strip of moulding, 18 inches wide, runs along the top of the walls. The ceilings are plaster and are ornately decorated with huge plaster disks, eight feet across in an intricate leaf and key design (Greek key design).

The doorways are magnificent, with unique side and fan lights and massive oak panel doors. This is carried out in both front and back hall doors, upstairs and down. The front steps are of brick, covered with concrete and widen at the bottom with sloping side walls, ending in a bare post. A winding flight of steps with side rail and moulded spindles ascend from the back porch. All the lower rooms contain the eight feet ceiling decorations and built-in closets by the fireplaces.

In the rear of the house was a large brick office, with a brick walk leading to the house, and farther to the rear was a frame kitchen with a brick cellar.

A small shed, built against the left rear corner of the house, covers the steps into the cellar,--a huge square room with a brick floor. This room is about 12 by 12 feet; the rest of the cellar space is bricked up, with small barred windows.

At the South end of the wide back porch is a stout flight of brick steps, now crumbled away, the treads worn into curves by years of use.

1() - Elsie Chamberlain, Cannonburg, Miss.

Note by F. Mignon:

I visited Gayoso in May, 1940, in company with Mr. Megurder Drake of Mount Ararat - Aranda plantations and with Mrs. J. E. Lambdin of Edgewood plantation, in Pine Ridge.

We were hospitably received by Mr. Fonda (correction Mr. Fonda) then owner and occupant, who had restored Gayoso in 1937 and 1939 about the time the above article was being written.

Mr. Fonda had successfully planted in Arkansas, had made some money, and come to Church Hill, Jefferson County, fallen in love with Gayoso, and purchased the famous Silas Brenta house, famous for its extravagant architecture, situated nearby, and tore it down for materials with which to restore Gayoso.

When completed Gayoso was in excellent state of repair, and greatly beloved by Mr. Fonda who unfortunately lost his money immediately afterward, and also two sons in their 20's who were killed, as well as suffering the distress of an premeditated accident on the part of his son, who went insane as a result. Mrs. Fonda disliked Gayoso intensely, although Mr. Fonda still cherished it in May 1940. It burned in October 1940, and the stock of the place sold at forced auction.

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Wednesday, Oct. 23d, 1940.

It was deliciously cool when I awoke.

Again I headed down the big road after my first two cups of black Louisiana coffee, carrying with me the neat little packet of sandwiches Frank had made for me.

On Bayou Brevelle bridge I sampled one and found it good. On the next Bayou bridge I finished the package.

Like yesterday morning when everything was a-stir, so was traffic this morning, but with one noteworthy difference. This morning everyone stopped to offer me a ride. Rayne's wife had been at Melrose to spend the night, and when she stopped for me, I jumped in and rode as far as town. Shortly afterwards I saw "ell Glass Dalmy, headed toward Melrose, and so I returned with her, having had little exercise, but glad nevertheless to get back before the postman came so that I could get a few more letters on the way.

Aunt Cammie and I had coffee together at ten. There was a small mail, with letters for me from Edith Wyatt Moore, making further suggestions for the scrapbook and looking forward to seeing me on Friday. And there was one from Megurder Drake, fortunately in longhand, for his letters given in dictation always manifest a certain restraint which his long hand letters do not reveal.

We worked for an hour and a half before dinner, and afterward during most of the afternoon, save for a couple of minutes during which Aunt Cammie broke off to do a round with Pilgrims who were as capable of undersanding what Melrose was all about as "a hog could appreciate a holiday".

I saw Tony. He told me he wasn't living with his "ama any more, but on the "ertzog plantation still. He said he was staying with the family living below the old gin,--the man's first name is Pyrrus, or something of the sort, I believe. He said he had no bed there, and accordingly had been sleeping on the floor for the past two weeks. He had pains in his back and his right and left side, was a little worried about it,--did I think a cold had settled in his kidneys. He looked tired and a little woegone. It set me to pondering on lots of things, in which the intellectual and economic questions hinged largely, although other difficulties of that old tendency of his to fly off at a tangent from time to time during the times he worked at Melrose and in New Orleans came back to mind, too. The whole picture sometimes seems so vast that it appears impossible for human beings to comprehend, and as difficult to grapple with as it might be to attempt to arrest ashooting-star as it flames across the heavens into nowhere.

Aunt Cammie and I read until eight,--reconstruction problems in Mississippi from 1867 to 1876. Aunt Cammie is below par physically, and I seemed to be spiritually when I went to bed about ten after doing quite a lot of mail.



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Thursday, Oct. 24th, 1940.

When I awoke at five o'clock, the waning moon was suggesting an early dawn, and as yet the fog which settled over the gardens before six hadn't formed.

But before eight o'clock the fog had gone and another perfect day got under way.

After mail, which was meager, Aunt Cammie and I worked together until noon, and before one o'clock, I went over to Felix's house to get a hair cut on his front gallery.

Before he arrived I chatted with the two Balthazar boys who were lolling about the picket fence hard by the cistern alongside the house. I lighted a Lucky and offered one to the youth whom I could see, the other being hidden by the angle of the house, although in actuality he was but three or four feet away. These mulatto youths are about 18, and the one who accepted the cigarette, seemed quite friendly. I asked him if the other boy did 't care for one, too, and he said that his brother did, but that he was too shamed faced to be seen by strangers. Shamed faced seems to be the expression indicating that a person is shy.

But the cigarette brought the tousled headed youth into view, and I was amused at this rustic coyness.

As Felix was cutting my hair, a tall, thin, distinguished looking mulatto came up to the gallery to chat with us, including Felix's wife Pearl who had joined us on the gallery while her husband was performing his tonsorial operations on me. The man's hair was beautifully wite, although his youthful figure and slender, straight form suggested a man possibly in his 40's. I was amazed when Pearl said that this was her father, which, of course made him Frank's father, too, and to myself I marveled at the unique physical qualities of this Morin family.

Before starting to cut my hair, Felix had sent the Balthazar boys back to the bayou to cut some trees for him. When my hair cut was finished, Felix drove me down there to see what progress the boys were making. They had felled three trees,-- each about a foot and a half or two feet thick. "B" as in Balthazar or Beaver, I imagine I remembered from the old ABC book. I was impressed by the expertness with which these youths finished off a forest. After I had seen them fell a second one, I engaged the "shamed faced" one in conversation but he was still rather too shy to get beyond a monosyllable. His brother laughed at him, and chattered along like a blue jay in disagreement with a squirrel.

Felix drove me back to Melrose, and for the balance of the afternoon Aunt Cammie and I worked together. Supper and afterward some reading until eight o'clock.

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Friday, October 25th, 1940. - page 1.

Still Indian Summer, with the temperature just right, although too hot in the sun. The sky maintains its magnificent blue, cut only in great streaks across the heavens by endless continuations of one or two herring bone clouds. The dust in the roads is ankle deep and as fine as talcum.

A batch of mail was done before breakfast arrived, and after Grandpa and I had finished our bacon, I banged off another flock of letters, and so to the store and the gin to see a couple of bales of cotton come tumbling out, and thence back to run over the incoming mail with Aunt Cammie.

Dinner at noon, and afterward a few little odds and ends to be looked over, and so back to the big house to say goodbye, and thence to Celeste's, where I found the car awaiting for me.

Celeste's mother rode down to Montrose with us, and we chatted for fifteen or twenty minutes before the Alexandria bus came along.

On the way down, I chatted with a young man of uncertain cultural attainments about his home region around McComb, Miss. He enchanted me with his idea of taking over a little farm of his uncle, for the big item on the farm which attracted the youth was that entrancing alliteration,--Pumkin Lane Pond,-- an old mill pond where the youth wanted to put up a tourist camp in the pine woods where the mill had stood. Pum'kin Lane Pond I shall remember a long time.

From Alexandria over to Watachez the trip was rather dull, with three silly people doing most of the loud talking,--a poor white-trash farmer whose crop having failed, had forced him to go to Alexandria in search of day labor on the construction of the new barracks for the conscripts of the 1940 military training law. He told me he was going home to Sicily Islands, "a.", to cast an absentee vote for Roosevelt. He didn't mind the failure of his cotton crop so much since by this work on the Army camp paid him \$1.25 an hour, and he was likely to make more in a couple months than he would have from his cotton anyway. A stuffed shirt of a woman, sitting in the seat ahead of us, heard the man mention his preference for Roosevelt and so proclaimed to others in her immediate neighborhood but across the aisle that she felt the whole country would appreciate a change in administration. A big darkie in the back of the bus was expounding his theory of the advantages of living with someone without the comfort of marriage vows, although he obviously wasn't making much impression on the Baptist gal who sat along side him, and really didn't seem in the mood for philandering.

Arriving in Watachez, I telephoned Mrs. Moore and went directly to her house. I found her rather better, and her eyes showed no indication of the suffering she had reported in her letter.



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Oct. 25th - Friday, 1940 - page 2.

She read me a great deal of data of various interest, and digressed exceedingly on points far beyond the confines of the farthest limits of the Natchez Region. We also nibbled on pretzels, sandwiches and mulled over some excellent beer. Her persistency in reading from her material was invigorating, since I merely had to listen and do almost nothing by way of oiling conversation, save for an occasional "Oh!" or an "Ah!".

We discussed plans for assembling material for a volume,--with the understanding, I hoped, that she would obtain the data needed, and I would edit and handle the publication. I am not certain that she had her mind on what I pointed out in expressing my views on this subject. To my surprise, she suggested that we draw up a contract to cover such books as we might bring out. It seemed she was undertaking a flourish of business acumen. She said she was acquainted with the phrasing required in such a document, and that it should begin: "To All Those To Whose Presents These May Come; Greetings, that I, Faith Wyatt Moore, party of the first part," and so on, although with this display of legal phraseology, or what she took it to be, and the enumeration of "the party of the first part", seemed to have satisfied whatever urge she had to speak on this point, and so she said she would write out such a contract and we could have it notarized on the morrow, or the next day.

A little before eleven, she became tired, and I insisted on getting in a couple of words, but I doubt if they registered, for about all had been said before that time, and possibly the beer hadn't agreed with her. And so I accepted her suggestion that I take home a whole stack of material with me,--papers about a foot high,--and so we said good night. I was tired, too, and before midnight was in bed and asleep.

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October 26th, 1940; - page 1.

It seemed strange to awaken in Natchez, for I hadn't staid in the town since last winter sometime. I missed Frank at six o'clock and my black steaming Louisiana coffee.

I had breakfast rather early, took a little walk, and then got in touch with Mrs. Ward at Landsdowne, just before she had left for Natchez, where she is secretary to the President of the City Bank and Trust Company. She said she would be delighted to show me the plans of Sloan, the architect, for Longwood, at the latter mansion this afternoon. Her husband, Jim Ward, is a grandson of old Haller Nutt, the builder of this remarkable pile.

I strolled around the town for a bit, looking over some of the old places, including the home of David Holmes, of which Aunt Sammie and I had read an excellent article yesterday morning in the Texas Gazette by Zaida Wells.

I saw Jeff Ambdin, and telephoned Mary his wife at Edgewood, and accepted the invitation to come out to have dinner with them at noon. Then I walked around and called on old Mr. Postlewait at his home. I found him as immaculate in his appearance as ever, even though it was Saturday morning about ten o'clock,--a curious hour for any one to make calls. He received me most kindly, and we chatted animatedly for an hour or more. We spoke of Mrs. Haller Nutt, who had done such a good job at extracting money from the Federal Government for confiscated cotton,--as mentioned in my Journal of May 11th, 1940. He said Mrs. Nutt was an exceptional woman, very positive in her ways, but withal quite hospitable, and always kept the room just to the right of the present entrance reserved for young men whom she always welcomed with enthusiasm. She furthered the custom for youth who at any time of night might find themselves within a few miles of Longwood, might find a place prepared for them in her exceptional mansion,--and usually the place had one or more guests in that particular room every night, although the visitors might be different several nights in a week. Old Mr. Postlewait said all the boys were crazy about old Mrs. Nutt, and while she wasn't a beautiful woman and never had been, she was a most fascinating woman, and everyone admired her straightforwardness, even though the ~~gentle~~ more sensitive ears were sometimes a little startled by the strength she displayed in her choice of forceful language.

In speaking with Mr. Postlewait, one is conscious of a variety of sensations which color the reaction to his words. In the first place, he doesn't seem old, although he was born in the 1850's, and in consequence remembers an astonishing number of prominent people of ante-bellum times whose lives in Natchez continued long through the last half of the 19th century.

His impeccable appearance, every one of his white hairs being in perfect order and every crease and fold of his clothing being faultless, one is impressed by the thought that his personal



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his personal life was equally flawless. As a result, the things he remembers seem to be of people without blemish and wholly without any of the delightful or regrettable weaknesses which endear human beings to us. A daughter of a distinguished old family of Natchez had recently remarked to me how sorry she was that Mr. Postlethwait had never stubbed his toe and fallen in the gutter just once, since that experience might have given a certain tinge of humanness to a personality which was too transparent. Somehow kindness and truth and strict regard for seeing nothing but that which conforms to the old book of etiquette makes everything that he says sound like a description of one inanimate clothes model might be recalling about another wax figure which stood in an adjoining display window, near at hand, and yet beyond physical reach and wholly outside the pale of feeling, either within his own hollow heart or in reference to an equally hollow breast of the faultless dummy.

As he spoke, too, I realized how thankful Christianity should be that Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness of temptation, since it would appear to have given Him the comprehension of lesser people's struggles and failures in life. For myself I have always felt that the Church made a great mistake is always assuming that the representatives of Christ on earth must be individuals without personal experience or blemish, for surely if I should ever feel impelled toward confession to a man of the cloth, I should prefer to make it to one whose own experience enabled him to comprehend some of the pitfalls I had encountered through having encountered them himself in his journey through life.

I asked Mr. Postlethwait about James Archer of Oakwood, Church Hill, who had been born in 1811, married to David Hunt's daughter, and lived for 70 or 80 years in the Natchez region. Mr. Postlethwait could remember him well. He said he was a man of medium height, a man well versed in learning and literature and that was about all he could say. He did mention Mrs. Archer, however, with an enlightening commentary. "It seems she was famous for her organizing ability,--doubtlessly inherited from her famous father; that while Mr. Archer had devoted much time to his studies and to his private school which he ran for so long at Oakwood, it was Mrs. Archer who actually ran the 2,000 acres plantation. She was famous for her neatness, he said, and her friends and neighbors declared that she carried this trait to the ultimate, for even the ducks, chickens and geese which she raised in quantities, were so perfectly trained that let one feather fall from their bodies at moulting time, and Mrs. Archer's training came into operation, and the obedient fowl immediately picked up the feather in its beak and carrying it to a designated spot, gently deposited it with the other feathers which the poultry had place there.

I asked him if he could recall if Mr. Archer wrote any *poetry*

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Saturday, Oct. 226th, 1940 - page 3.

but he could <sup>not</sup> recall any, although he said he had understood Mr. Archer did write some. I asked him if he recalled if it was this James Archer who had been elected as a representative in the Legislature as a Republican during the storm days of Reconstruction. He said it was the same person. ~~Mrs~~ Mr. Archer's difficulties with the colored population at this time may account for his lines about the "nigger", which included:

"Who prays and siggs and shouts so loud,  
And best enjoys a funeral crowd,  
and glories in another's shroud,----The Nigger".

The remainder of our conversation turned around other personalities about whom I seemed to have learned about as much elsewhere as I could from Mr. Postlethwait, and so we fell to discussing his fine old house,--built about 1812, or possibly earlier and we thus brought the visit to a close. On the way out, in true conformity of the elegant old school, Mr. Postlethwait accompanied me down the steps, asking me to stroll with him to the huge sweet olive tree growing in the garden, from which with great care to select the best, he cut a lovely sprig with his pocket knife, and placing the spring in my button hole remarked that with this token his good wishes for a happy day would go forth with me.

I like Mr. Postlethwait, and as I ~~went~~ wended my way toward town, I thought of him exactly as I would think, with regret, in leaving a vase of dried rose petals, with only the fragrance of other season remaining behind to suggest little of the days when the petals were in full bloom but only the memories of half forgotten times which would come back into being only if those who catch the aroma contrive to re-fashion and re-vivify those times in one's own mind.

I encountered Myrtle and Charles Byrne on the street, and we had a pleasant chat, and I accepted their invitation to spend the afternoon with them tomorrow in the country.

At noon, I dropped by Jeff Lambdin's office, and together we drove out to love Edgewood at Pine Ridge for dinner. It was good to see Mary again and the boys and her brother, Newman Henderson. Dinner was a beautifully served and as delicious as always. It was a grand interlude after a morning of pilgrimage and before a rather busy afternoon.

At two o'clock, we all drove back to town together, dropping Jeff at his office and the boys at the physicians', while Mary, in response to my desire to see Zaida Wells, drove me directly to State Street, where in the 700 block we saw her in the street talking with a neighbor who turned out to be Mrs. Kate Davis, nee Chamberlain, whose father, Dr. Chamberlain had been Aunt Olivia Unbar and cousin Eliza Lloyd Magruder's physician, and mentioned frequently in the latter diary in the 1850's.



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Mary and I joined the two ladies, and chatted for a few moments together, when Mary had to run along to pick up her sons, and I lingered behind to talk Natchez history.

Mrs. Chamberlain seemed to be a lovely lady. Zaida appeared to be a distinctive character and well in line with the descriptions I had heard of her. She is possibly five feet in height, has a manish bob, wears glasses and masculine shoes. Her voice is determined and her words and views distinctly personal without any regard for anyone outside herself, I reckon. She certainly is the perfect antithesis of Mr. Postlethwait, and as each represents an extreme, one instantly recalls, in meeting either of them those wise words of the Greek philosopher having to do with moderation in everything.

No sooner had Mary departed that we began speaking of Washington, Mississippi, and at the mention of the old capitol, Zaida said she had just been given a map of the vanished seat of the Government, and that if I would cross the street with her she would give it to me. I was struck by her generosity, and when I hinted that she might have need for it herself, she said frankly that she would but that she would make the person who had copied this from the records in the Chancery Court copy it again for her. She also gave me several other papers concerning the town and some excerpts from interesting Natchez wills. She had asked me to wait on her doorstep for her, as her house hadn't been "cleaned up" for the week-end. As the door opened, I heard several dogs barking. I had heard of her vast collection of stray curs, and the sound from within bore out this tale. We chatted for a moment on her little porch, during which time, a man came out of her house,--I suppose it was her brother, but she never glanced at him, and in a minute or two he returned in-doors.

I asked her if she had ever known old Mrs. Haller Nutt. She said she hadn't, but that she had known plenty of her friends. She said that Mrs. Nutt was a woman who always spoke her mind, and didn't care who heard her and that she had had plenty of fine friends in spite of the fact that she used words frequently that would have shocked anyone, had these words been used by any one else save Mrs. Nutt. She said that the children of Mrs. Nutt weren't much good and only in the negative virtues and vices they resembled their mother. She had asked me something about my knowledge about the old lady Nutt getting the money out of the Government for her confiscated cotton. I feigned ignorance. Well, she didn't know much about that she said, although she remembered well enough when the children after their mother's death, when the final settlement had been made and how they all turned the town up-side down by the resulting law suit. She said that Mrs. Nutt's son, Haller, who had died in his early 20's

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had left an off-spring, and to this child by a colored woman, he had left his share of the Nutt estate. None of the family, she said, expected to hear anything more about this child, until about the time the estate was to be divided, Gerard Brandon the lawyer,--and Mrs. Charles A. Brandon's husband's cousin, I believe, suddenly appeared in Court, representing the rights of this mulatto child. It seems that the mother had been a cook of the Brandon's at Brandon Hall. It wasn't clear to Zaida if they had been married or not, but she felt sure young Haller Nutt had in reality married the colored cook. As the laws of Mississippi bar such marriages, it would seem that it must have taken place outside the state, but in any event, it appeared that young Haller must have made his will leaving his share to a certain mulatto youth rather than to his mulatto child. In any event, there was a great stir in the town, and the verdict finally rendered was in favor of the youth. Under what name he appeared and where he may have gone after the trial, Zaida didn't know, but she was sure he didn't remain in Natchez.

This was certainly a pretty prelude to my appointment at four o'clock with Mrs. James Ward of Landsdowne, whose husband must be a cousin of this mulatto youth. But the clock was moving around and we had agreed,--Mrs. Ward and I, to run out to the old Nutt mansion, Longwood this afternoon. Besides, Mrs. Davis was waiting for me on the gallery of her house across the street, and so I said goodbye to Zaida, and looked forward to dishing the local gossip again.

It was almost startling to join Mrs. Davis again, for Mrs. Davis is a splendid example of the old school,--born in the early 1860's, and bearing all the marks of refinement and delicacy, so evident in Mr. Postlethwait, yet somehow more frank in her manner and less cagey in her appraisal of the old pillars of society although withal under no pretenses whatsoever in attempting to gloss any of them over.

She, too, had known Madam Nutt, had admired her striking personality, regretted her lack of consideration for other people's sensibilities and spoke of her acquisitive methods in a detached sort of way that led you to understand that while she in no way approved of the methods she employed, she had to confess that the woman knew what she wanted and got it, too. I think she felt that as a symbol of old Natchez, Mrs. Nutt would not be a correct or shining light, but she in no way side-stepped her virtues or an absence of them. I liked her presentation. We moved on to other considerations, primarily about antebellum Church Hill people, and I almost fell off my chair when she casually remarked in response to a question regarding Eliza Lloyd Agruder that she had known her well for years. If she had told me she had known Homer, I shouldn't have been more taken back, for after speaking with countless numbers of oldsters in this region, I have never before run across one who had been able to tell me more than that they had heard of the writer of the Diary, as some sort of a vague figure of whom other people



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of whom others had people had mentioned but none had ever seen or known anything about.

Mrs. Davis seemed taken back at my enthusiasm, and at the same time perplexed that I should have ever heard of "Cousin Eliza". She started to tell me a few things about her, but the clock was approaching four, and so I beg her to save everything until Monday for me when I should return to chat with her again, during which meeting I hoped we might reminisce,--or rather she might,--about Cousin Eliza and Aunt Turpin and her twin sister, Olivia Dunbar.

And so at four o'clock I met Mrs. Ward at the Bola, and together we started for Longwood. It was a marvelous afternoon, as much like a Spring day as any other season, with the leaves still intact on the great trees surrounding Arlington, as we passed along Comochito Street, the sun rays slanting through the foliage, not as so ethereal changing in intensity from hour to hour but rather impressing one as though this were an hour which had been caught by some master painter, put down on canvas, and would accordingly linger on for a century, with only a far-distant patina of age to be anticipated long years hence.

Mrs. Ward talked easily and in her manner displaying the same generosity of time and courtesy for others enthusiasms for things "atchez" that some many ladies of "atchez" manifest to any visitor who seems impressed by the atmosphere of the place and desirous to know it better. This quality of hospitality has so often impressed me as being the more rare since so few of these people seem to place any value of beauty or historic interest which Chance has given them to be a part of and in many cases the opportunity to preside over. Somehow I felt that for Mrs. Ward, her lovely "andsdowne" home was a fine plantation home one of whose cardinal virtues was to attract pilgrims who were glad to pay a fee to visit it and for herself and her husband, one fourth owner of Longwood, that extraordinary sylvan mansion was likewise a source of income from the curious passerby, and an excellent place as a source of revenue by day, and a situation of manifold advantages for parties by night, gatherings more animated by jazz music and the flowing bowl than the amenities of cultural and spiritual contacts.

*Longwood*

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From the lower Woodville road, we turned into the long winding woody plantation road that twists and turns through traces and after crossing a little stream, climbed slowly up the great live-oak studded elevation on the crown of which stands eerie Longwood. There were two or three cars parked by the entrance to the house, but on entering the great pile, we saw no one, although the sound of boisterous laughter echo a dissonant note from one of the 16 rooms which constituted the ground floor. We entered the elegant old dining room, beautifully furnished with handsome old pieces, and on into an adjoining drawing room, on the walls of which hung the four framed plans of various floors of Longwood, drawn and signed by Sloan of Philadelphia. They were remarkable, somehow seeming less like plans of a mansion than like a sketch for exquisite doilies.

As we examined them in detail in the twilight, a tall old colored woman wearing a long coat and an old black straw hat appeared from somewhere. Mrs. Ward spoke to her kindly, and asked where Captain Willie was. The old woman pointed to a closed door leading to the drawing room further along, and said simply: "Miss Agnes, Cap. Willie, he done say he's busy helpin' them folks with a birthday, but he'll sure want to see you all if he knowed you was here."

But Mrs. Ward told her not to disturb the Captain,-- William Harper, grandson, I believe of old Mrs. Nutt, who party must have been reaching a stage of success if one were to judge from the sound of merriment which filtered through the closed doors.

Arriving Pilgrims at this moment called the old colored woman away, and Mrs. Ward and I continued our examination of the Sloan plans and then wandered about the elegantly furnished rooms of the old mansion, all of which radiate from the great round room in the center of the house. Mrs. Ward told me that they have loads of fun at parties they give out here from time to time, when they place the orchestra in this circular room, open all the doors from the surrounding rooms into this circular one, and so with the goodly quantity of liquor that flows and the strains of the orchestra filling each of the surrounding rooms with equal force, the guests, instead of dancing in one of the large rooms or in the great circular one, dance around and around the house, as they move from room to room. How different all this sounded to me as I contrasted the present enthusiasms of the current owners of Longwood with those of Dr. Waller Nutt, the builder, when elegant society counted it a privilege to be received by this distinguished planter and student and public-spirited man, whose library of ten or twelve thousand volumes was unsurpassed in the Mississippi Valley, and Mrs. Nutt whose extraordinary personality ruled and enthralled the cream of the social world. Frankly, I felt sorry for present day Longwood.



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After wandering over the house, we stepped out to survey it from the outside. Mrs. Ward pointed to the present one story kitchen. He said that originally it had it planned to erect a three story building on that site, with covered galleries from it leaving respectively to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd stories of the big house, and so to facilitate the service of food, water etc of the big house, and by this three story building making it possible for the servants to enter and leave the big house without having to use the staircases of the mansion.

We visited the servants quarters,--an imposing building in any other setting, but somehow seeming rather small in this proximity to the great house. Across the front of this servant's building runs a double gallery facing the great live-oaks on the west side of the mansion. There are four or five large rooms, each with great fireplaces, on the ground floor. These rooms are cluttered with fine old piece of furniture, covered with dust. I was particularly impressed by an elegant side board, about 12 or 16 feet long and a beautifully cared four poster bed of imposing proportions. The sons of old Madam Nutt had converted this Mount-Vernon-like establishment into a garconniere in the late 1860's, and much of the fine furniture from Ashburn, since burned, and old Nutt heirlooms were used in the decorating of this place. I was further impressed by the fine old glass paned book cases in two of the rooms. These were built into the walls and ran from one side of the room to the other, and almost to the ceiling.

Above these apartments,--each having a door onto the front gallery, were similar apartments opening onto the gallery immediately above the lower one. We stepped out to look at the edifice again, and then passed around one end, down a few brick steps, and thence into another series of rooms, equally large, in the sub-basement, immediately beneath the ground floor. Each of these apartments opened into what had formerly been a fine garden, long since disappeared, as had the double gallery which also ran the full length of this side of the house in duplication of the one on the other side. There was little furniture down here, but the rooms were inviting, and the floors in good condition, being paved with brick.

Some of the openings in this building, which the Nutts had occupied during the building of Longwood, had come from the old Arlington-like mansion, formerly occupying the present Longwood site,--the old Williams home where Sargent Prentiss had lived and died.

Back to the big house, we sent the servant to appraise Capt. Willie that we were there. He came out, cordial and a little intoxicated, from the guests who were celebrating within. We chatted a few moments, and then said goodby, with the promise to come back again shortly. As Mrs. Ward and I drove away,

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twilights was settling over the great oaks and magnolias that be-forest this enchanted domain. With a wave of her hand, Mrs. Ward remarked that over that way, and down that long lane of giant magnolias lay the ten acres rose garden of old Mrs. Nutt, and a little to the left was the burying ground, and over to the right was the site of the artificial pond, and beyond that was the old bowling green, and further along the forgotten and crumbling summer house. We crossed the little stream as night drew its curtain a little closer and the tangle of varnish trees and a net work of vines and bushes along the narrow banks on either side of this narrow little road cut off our view. Of all the places in the world I know, the "atchez region is the most beautiful, the people most casual about it and unpredictable, and Longwood the most unbelievable.

Back in town, Mrs. Ward said she would enjoy a drink. We stopped at Kemp's Bend, a saloon on Earl street adjoining the Eola hotel, where the view from the street, looking down the long, well patronized bar somehow belied the fact that Mississippi is a dry state, although at the same time the sight confirmed the crack about the free state of Adams.

We we opened the door to the saloon, the three bar tenders and several of the rather ordinary looking bar-ii flies, greeted Mrs. Ward. We made our way toward the back of the place and around to the left into a semi-private room, fitted up with cheap old dilapidated sofas and chairs. It reminded me of the old speakeasies in the 40's and 50's in Manhattan. We had two or three whiskeys and soda. Mrs. Ward said that the drinks here were rather expensive,--twenty-five cents each, and that it was the custom of herself and her friends to buy their liquor here in bottles and take it with them to parties. She said that the "resident of the City Bank and Trust Company had once remarked that he didn't think it wise for him as a member of the bank to patronize the place openly. "Somehow I inferred that since Mrs. Ward is his secretary, this remark may have been made for her benefit, but it is was, it was wasted. As we were leaving the place, Mrs. Ward's brother came in. He is a Marshall, but I have forgotten his first name. He was buying bottles of whiskey. He said "r. Ward had come home to "andsdowne and was staying h me that evening. Margaret Merrill came in. She said Captain "arper was with her, and that all of us should go out to the Wind Mill or some other night club. I expressed my regret that I had another appointment, and must deny myself the pleasure.

And so we all said good bye, and I went around to corner to "ain Street to eat my dinner alone. Back to the house, I met "r. "hisholm, the archiologist, whose is excavating the Indian "ounds at "hite "pple Village for "eff. "avis Dixon. He is an intelligent man, and it was refreshing to speak with him for a little while after such a busy afternoon. By eleven o'clock I was in bed, but I heard a church bell strike 12, 1, and 2 before I got the fate of "ongwood off my mind and sleep overtook me.



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I awoke about six o'clock, bathed leisurely and puttered about my room, sorting over pictures and papers and day-dreaming a little about people in New York and in Louisiana.

After breakfast at the Mola, I made a little tour about the older section of the town, and took a brisk walk along the bluffs. The sun was right and the air bracing. By 10 o'clock I was back home again, shaved and bathed and ready for Church. As I was putting on my shoes, someone knocked at my door, and turning the key, entered. It was the maid,--a thin, comely looking colored girl of perhaps 17 or 18. She asked if I minded if she straighten up my room. I didn't. She said everyone had left the house and that we were all alone. The church bell rang, and I selected a fresh necktie. The poor girl adjusted the Venetian blinds to cut out the glare of the sun. She asked if there wasn't something she could do for me. There wasn't. The church bell rang again. Poor child. She said she would bring me some extra towels. I thanked her, flipped her a coin, and went out.

The sunshine was dazzling as I stepped out into the street, and it was pleasant to walk on the shady side of the thoroughfares until I came to the splendid old Presbyterian Church, distinguished for its splendid design by Levi Weeks who had been the architect for Auburn, and sometimes a little too well known for the fact that this Church was built by money from a lottery,--a fact which its members do not often bring up in discussing the fine old building.

The service was good, pleasant singing by the choir and congregation and a short, fast moving sermon by the youngish minister. After the service I chatted with him and several Natchez friends who worship here,--Mr. and Miss Postelthwait, Miss Inez Montgomery, Mrs. Moore's daughter and others.

Afterward I telephoned Mrs. Ferriday Byrnes to inquire after the progress of her cold, and was glad to learn that she was up and about as was her husband. She invited me to have dinner with them and I accordingly ran over to their somewhat pretentious house on South Union,--No. 601. I found Ferriday awaiting me on the front gallery, and both he and Rowan received me with their customary cordiality which almost borders on the luscious. We stepped into the ~~gr~~ drawing room, a room which always surprised me, for its taste is bad,--dark woodwork, too much furniture and a curious musicians gallery or something of the sort about six feet from the floor in one corner. With the outside of the house looking like a bloated and slightly deformed Georgian mansion and the inside so closely bordering on 1870 Renaissance, I felt a little shiver go up my spine, and I was glad when Henderson Chase, who was also at the house for dinner suggested lightening the gass log.

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Before dinner, we four chatted for a few moments over our whiskey and soda. Rowan spoke of Lyle and said what a fine man Ferriday thought him to be when shortly after meeting him for the first time, Lyle had suggested that Ferriday "join him in a couple of snorts" before supper.

Mr. Chase seemed surprised to learn that I had ever heard of Mantua, the home of his grandfather, the Rev. Benjamin Chase. We spoke of it for a moment, I discovered that he couldn't tell me much about the place that I hadn't already heard from older people who knew it better.

Somehow the conversation got around to Church Hill, and we fell to talking of the Drake family. Henderson told us that Magruder's father or grandfather, had been a circuit rider in that community, and was noted for his piety and his abhorrence of strong language. Another resident of that neighborhood was more free with his use of forceful words. I believe the man's name was Morris, Morrison or something of the sort. For the most part Mr. Morris and the Reverend Drake had treated each other with respect and consideration for the other's preferences in phraseology, although Mr. Morris did once say something which shocked the Rev. Drake. It seems that one cold drizzly winter's day, while making his journey from one church to another on horseback, the Rev. Drake met Mr. Morris, with some of his companions on the road. By way of a pleasant greeting the Rev., in greeting them, volunteered the observation: "It is certainly a fine day for ducks".

"Yes," responded Morris, "but you must admit that it's Hell on old drakes."

A little before 2 o'clock we sat down to dinner. The table was beautifully dressed and the food and service perfect. I sat on Rowan's right, and Mr. Chase on Ferriday's left, with a great bouquet of flowers so placed on the table that it cut off my view completely from Mr. Chase. Conversation accordingly flowed primarily as between Rowan, her husband and me. It was amusing to hear the account of their entertainment a year or so back of Monsiur and Madame Leroux of Paris. The Leroux spoke about as much English as the Byrnes spoke French, and the resulting attempts at conversation were a little confusing. When the time came for the guests to depart, Ferriday shook hands with his guests, and Rowan did, too. Just as they were out on the front gallery, however, Ferriday remembered something, and ran out after them calling excitedly: "Wait, wait, I almost forgot",--and snatching at Madame Leroux's hand, he bent over quickly and kissed it with a resounding smack, and with the poor lady confused and amazed, he again said goodbye, and re-entered the house.



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A little after three, I said goodbye to my hosts and their guest, and drove across town to Cherokee, where Charles and Myrtle were waiting for me. A Miss Clark, their guest, was joining us in a little trip along the old Kingston Road, where he headed directly. We drove several miles along this beautiful old trace road, chattering much about local doings of the Wachez Pilgrimage Clubs, etc. We stopped some miles below Wachez, leaving our car at the locked gate of Cherry Grove, the old Surget place,--or possibly it would be more correct to say one of the many old Surget places, for they certainly owned to o many.

Climbing the fence, we walked the long winding woods road for perhaps a mile when we came to another gate, leading us into the former garden,--now almost a park. There was a dimishing artificial lake on the right, and away among the trees at the left the old family cemetery. The house, - gray and weather beaten, stood some 500 yars ahead of us beyond the great oaks and tulip trees. In front of the place, we were impressed by the great heart haded garden entirely surrounded by a great old box hedge.

The house seemed ever so old, yet somehow suggested that a part of the decorative features were of a latter period than the main section of the house. It is a two and a half or three story house with a double gallery running across the front, and a horse-shoe staircase winding gravely up to the upper gallery. The botton posts of this beautiful old double stair case had rotten away. A curious apron of wood ran along the eadge of the upper gallery, possibly to cut the sunshine but I'm afraid it was placed there in the 1880's when the house was already ever so old, as a kind of refurbishing process like a miserable attempt of a person with bad taste who feels that a little rusing of battenberg or cheap lace might tone up the appearance of a dress with good lines, although any layman would realize that this extraeneous do-dad would merely succeed in ruining something of the virtue which the creation possessed without this.

At either end of this large house there were rather curious Venetian-like balconies, --xx jutting out unexpectedly from the second story, and around the back of the house and the projecting el in the rear ran a fabulous double gallery, with a curious apron-like xx eave,--shingled and badly Japanese, sticking out all around the ceiling of both the upper and lower gallery, and xx looking twice as bad and somewhat ridiculous because the artificial roofing on this projecting wedge from both the upper and lower gallery not only had little reason for being but also the lower line of eaves, being precisely under these on the upper gallery, made it entirely useless in protect ng the lower gallery from the rain, since the upper gallery immediately above had already taken care of that. It somehow reminded me of an umbrella which a lunatic might devise,--one handle and one central rod, with two covers, one distinctly separate and above the other and hence perfectly silly.

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Slowly we walked back up the old plantation road toward the car. The afternoon was magnificent, clear blue sky with the long golden rays of the sun slanting slowly through the marvelous tangle of forest on either side. I was a little bit sorry I had never been advised not to visit Cherry Grove, for this place, now belonging to Carlotta Surget,--the divorced wife of Dave McKitterick, is the only one in the whole Wachez region I have ever seen that has disappointed me.

From Cherry Grove, we continued down the Kingston Road as far as Antua. We stopped, chatted with the poor children who played about in the front,--some of them being the two little girls and the fat baby which Mary and I had seen there in May.

We rambled through this lovely old, dilapidated mansion, both on the main floor and on the upper floor where old Mr. Chase in a happier days had had his wonderful museum and elegant soirees. The fine old cabinets with their generously paned fronts are still intact, although I cannot imagine how they have escaped the destruction which has so nearly wrecked the rest of the house. I'm afraid the old place will burn up or collapse before the year is out, and even though it may survive a little longer, someone will hit upon the idea of using these delicious old cabinets for kindling wood, and the souvenir of old Rev. Chase will be further obliterated.

It was dark when we he ded to ard Wachez again. We talked much of contemporary Mississippi, and Miss Clark could contribute some side lights which were arresting. I believe she comes from the Delta country, and has worked in different sections of the State in some Federal bureau,--Child Health or something of the sort. She mentioned how curiously the laws of Mississippi are constructed and construed in regard to the adopting of children. One case she mentioned which was settled in the Courts this year. A widow with three children succeeded in getting her little boy placed in an orphan asylum, and her two little daughters adopted by her sister-in-law. The Judge had found this a good way out of her inability to support the children. After there was some sort of personal animosity which developed, either between the mother and the foster-mother of the children or between the Judge and foster-mother, I'm not quite sure. In any event, it was a Solomon ruling on the part of the Judge that the foster-mother was unsuited to bring up the children, and so the two little girls were adopted a second time, but this time by their own mother, which certainly is an odd twist to motherhood.

Miss Clark also spoke of Attiesburg, Miss. I asked her if she had ever been to The Book Farm there, the name being familiar because of the number of books coming from there to Helrose. Miss Clark said it was an exceptional place, way out in the country and surrounded by a tall wire fence, which local yokels declared were charged with electricity. Because Mr. Gartman who runs the place came from Germany originally, and because of the remoteness of



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remoteness of the place and the fact that it is fenced in, rumors began to fly around Attiesburg that Hartman was a Nazi spy and operated a secret radio transmitter. What spies would be spying in the Book Farm and what poor old Mr. Hartman would be transmitting I know not, but in any event, the A.B.I., suddenly descended on him and whisked him away to New Orleans in the twinkling of an eye. I was glad to learn that shortly afterward Mr. Hartman was again back at the Book Farm, and I trust the good work he does for students,--making up bibliography, securing rare books, publishing valuable items such as an index of Claiborne, etc., may go on.

Back to lovely Cherokee, we all were enchanted to get some of the dust off, and regain our vitality through the aid and comfort of a couple of good cocktails in the lovely big drawing room of this delicious house. Afterwards we had supper, sliced turkey, salad, cranberries and a flock of cold cuts in the dining room, so beautifully and simply furnished that it attains almost that quality of excellence attributed to the best dressed person, whom, it is said, is he or she whose clothes one never notices.

We chatted until ten thirty in the front drawing room, and afterwards Charles took me home in the car. I had a good day, and I feel asleep almost before striking my pillow.

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~~Monday, Oct~~ <sup>78</sup> ~~October 28, 29th~~ 1940 - page 1.

Up and abroad before seven,--a curious hour, I discover after a twelfth month on a plantation to thus find the town still half asleep.

I breakfasted at the coffee shop, and like it

I had promised to drop by Mrs. Moore's at nine, and it wasn't either when I had done with breakfast, and so I decided on a short "constitutional". Down on lower Main Street I met Mr. Chisholm, the archeologist whom I had met a night or so before. He invited me to run down to see the Mounds at White Apple Village, but I had to promise to make it another time. My stroll then took me by the old Andrew Marshcalk house, and up to Connolly's Tavern on Elliott's Hill. It was good to stroll through the gardens at this hour of the day when no one was about, the air was cool and clear and the breeze on this elevation so invigorating. The little pavement of red bricks that cut through the gardens at right angles to each other impressed me in their old fashioned charm of color and harmony with the old fashioned flowers that bordered them. The adjoining lawns were immaculately cut. Up until this moment,--save for one exception, I had always thought that a walk was supposed to lead to some place or something. Two of these did,--for each end abruptly at the edge of a precipice, with no stone bench, no hedge, no nothing to restrain one from taking one more step and plunging into an abyss. Mayor Ryan of New York in the 1920's had built a wonderful double staircase, I recalled, which stepped down the Morris Heights elevation near the old Jumel Mansion at 167 Street. These steps landed one precisely in a swamp,--but that was a political scandal, and surely the Garden Club couldn't have engineered this flight into fancy for graft.

For half an hour I walked up and down the upper and lower gallery of the Inn, recalling to mind the story of the Mayor in ante-bellum times who had this home as his residence, and how he had attempted to run out the gamblers from under the hill, and how a mob of ruffians had attacked his home, and thrown stones through the windows, one of them killing his wife, and how thus attacked, the Mayor had sent out notices of his wife's death on one side of which had been the printed material, and on the other a reproduction of the Ace of Spades. The gamblers immediately found Matchez too hot, and Under The Hill had a short season of deserted gaming tables.

I had hoped to see the inside of the Inn before I left, but it was now approaching nine o'clock, and so I continued my walk, passing by classic Cherokee and on beyond huge old Stanton Hall, which, in ante-bellum times the Stantons called Belfast,--and so around to Mrs. Moore's.

We had a delightful chat, in spite of numerous interruptions, both from callers and from telephone demands on her time. The mail came, too, and that had to be gone over also. We accordingly decided



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to go out, stopping first at the photographers on Commerce, relative to photographing the plans of Longwood, and thence around to Norman's studio, to run through his collection of photographs on plantation houses which might have disappeared in recent years. He hadn't any, although we ran through all his prints.

As we were going through the files, Mr. Norman said he was going out for a little while, and that we might answer the telephone if it rang during his absence. He reminded me of the time two or three years ago -- not by his mentioning of it however, when I wrote him asking that he give me a large reproduction of his film on the ruins of Windsor, near Port Gibson. At that time, in response to my special delivery, he sent my letter, -- I never did know why to someone from Natchez who chance to be in New York a month or two later, -- possibly three months later. That person called on me in New York and showed me my letter, ordering this item, but never did do anything about getting the reproduction, -- in fact, I haven't to this day ever received any communication from Mr. Norman. I wonder if and how he does much business.

But I did find a couple of things in the films in his collection which interested me, and I ordered them, after which, Mrs. Moore and I telephoned Mrs. Brandon to have luncheon with us at the Eola, and in the half hour interim, Mrs. Moore and I wandered around the Court House square. It was nice to see the old home of Dr. Mercer of Laurel Hill plantation and New Orleans, where his old home is at present known as the home of the Boston Club. On the North side of the square, we stopped to look at the old, old Pirest's house, which is listed in the Historic Building's Survey Catalogue of photographs under some other title. It is a three story edifice, distinctly gaunt and somehow Spanish in feeling. It was built for three priests sent her from Spain, -- I believe they were of Irish nationality, during the Spanish occupation of this region during the latter half of the 18th century. I was particularly struck by the doorway, -- rather elegant and restrained, and in keeping with the religious nature of its original purpose. I notice a double cross worked in the design of the door-way, -- or rather the door itself.

I reckon this old place will not survive the march of progress much longer, for already it looks rather shabby, and negroes are living on the ground floor, suggesting that some cold night the place may easily fall accident to a conflagration.

At twelve, we met Mrs. Brandon with Mrs. Moore and together we had lunch together. It was good to see Mrs. Brandon, and pleasant to talk at a chez and Washington during an excellent hour and a half.

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After saying goodbye to the ladies at two o'clock, I walked over to 704 State Street to call on Mrs. Kate Davis.

I found her expecting me, and withal as kindly as her she had been on Saturday.

We chatted on the front gallery for half an hour speaking of Arunda Plantation, Oakland Plantation, and particularly of Eliza Lloyd Magruder, who had spent so many years of her life with her Aunt, Olivia Magruder Dunar at Arunda, and later at the home of Aunt Olivia's twin sister, Aunt Lavinia Turpin at Oakland, on the Morgantown Road.

Mrs. Davis had known Cousin Eliza well during the years after Aunt Lavinia Turpin had died, while Cousin Eliza Lloyd became the Mistress of Oakland for her Aunt's son in law, Mr. Kingsley Hutton.

Mrs. Davis said that Cousin Eliza Lloyd was large framed, -- excessively neat in appearance, but withal quite excellent in her figure which did not tend toward enbonpoint, and in her appearance one was not struck so much by her tidiness but rather by the old fashioned curls she wore in ringlets about her face, under her carefully arranged hair. Perhaps the most striking feature of Eliza, however, was not so much her appearance as the quality of her voice, -- which was flat. Added to this fact was a tendency she had always experienced, -- severe headaches. The latter Eliza had referred to frequently in her diary, as she had also mentioned her other prevailing ailment, -- intense headaches, -- and removal of a polypus now and then from her nose by Dr. Chamberlain.

As Mrs. Davis's father, Mr. or rather Dr. Chamberlain had been Cousin Eliza's physician for ever so long. He had always been interested in her problems physically for their cause was rather unexpected. It seems that as a child, Cousin Eliza had been sewing when inadvertently she swallowed one or more needles she chanced to have in her mouth. These had gone into her stomach, and then traveled upward into her head, and it was the pressure from these which caused her excessive attacks of headache. They were also the cause of the polypuses which formed on her nose, and likewise the set of glands and membranes they effected caused Cousin Eliza's voice to take on a flatness which had increased during the years, so that in spite of the fact that her conversation was always understandable, it was at the same time rather arresting, and sometimes of a tonal quality which was distinctly unpleasant, -- probably both to herself and to her auditors.

After 1859, when Aunt Olivia died at Arundoo and was buried at Oakley Grove, Cousin Eliza moved down to Oakland on the Morgantown Road. Her Aunt Lavinia at that time, I believe was still alive, but her son in law was running the place and Cousin Eliza assisted in the raising of Mr. Hutton's two children. I believe the Turpin girl who had married Mr. Hutton had been dead for some years.



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It was at Oakland that Mrs. Davis had known Eliza so long. Always prim in appearance, Cousin Eliza always effected the skirt and shirt waste costume,--usually in the same material, which became so popular in the 1880's and 1890's.

Cousin Eliza was an excellent housekeeper, and Oakland under her supervisin,--so far as the household was concerned, was run magnificently, from the point of view of excellence of servants, amplitude of amenities, and considerations for Mr. Hutton and the two children.

I believe I have described Oakland in this Journal before. Mrs. Davis' description of the place coincided very nicely,--the long gallery facing the South East, running fully across the front of the house, and continuing to the descending drawing room and bed room which were separated from the main mansion by a court, but joined by the continuous line of the front gallery which united them, and continued along the front of the descending buildings.

Included in the large room which looked out on the gallery of the main wing of the house were the large drawing room, and to its right a large bed room--Mr. Huttons, while to the left of the great drawing room,--famous for its marvelous great rosewood sofas, was the dining room, giving out on the gallery. Immediately behind the dining room, and opening of the hall took was the bed-room of Cousin Eliza Lloyd, from whose rear windows one might see the towers and church spires of the churches in "atchez away to the North West. In Eliza's room, Mrs. Davis remembered the lovely modest four poster bed and the exquisite little dressing table. Both were in mahogany, as she recalled, and the two of them were elegant in their simplicity, although the mirror of the dressing table was supported by rather elegantly carved arms.

It was heartening to learn that Eliza took such excellent care of the household of old Mr. Hutton, and was so circumspect in watching out for the two children. I was glad to learn that all during her life at Oakland, where she died, in 1884, I believe, Cousin Eliza had every comfort and a measure of elegance, too. It's a pity that the Hutton boy she helped raised turned out to be so worthless and that he ran the plantation into the ground later, and ended up by selling things off piece meal from the house for narcotics,--his wife was sharing in this indulgence,--and laterer ended up by seeing the place consumed by fire,--so that practically everything, including treasure of the Hilles family, too, went up in smoke,--all save, Cousin Eliza's Diary.

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From Cousin Eliza, Mrs. Davis turned to old Uncle Archer,--James Archer,--David Hunt's son-in-law.

"Old Uncle Archer,--he was the laziest man who ever lived,"--thus Mrs. Davis gave me a note to set the la.

"If you will come with me to Oakwood, the old Archer home up there by Church Hill, and if the floor hasn't been changed recently, I'll show you the exact place where old Uncle Archer sat in the same chair for 75 years, while his wife managed the plantation, brought up the children and did a thousand and one things to make the vast Oakwood gardens so famous, the products of Oakwood so marketable and, in spite of her husband, much that spread the fame of the Archer school through the region, so that it attracted the sons of the gentry for miles around. Old Uncle Archer during all these years just sat, getting up only long enough to conduct his classes and then return to his same old chair to scribble his poetry which for the most part lack rhyme or reason for being.

Mrs. Davis's description of old Uncle Archer's chair fascinated me. She said that you could be sure he would have it as comfortable as possible, since he occupied it for ever so long. It was an arm chair, with a back that was of medium height, and a slight curve in it. Unlike any other chair she had ever seen, this one had springs under the two front legs,--springs from a set of bed-springs, and these were so fastened to the feet of the chair,--the two front feet, of course, that the springs themselves rested on the floor, and the feet just off the floor, so that old Uncle Archer could gently jiggle back and forth, ~~XXXXXX~~ back and forth in the same spot for 75 years as the springs slowly ate into the floor of his study, for never in the 75 years did he move this strange contraption from its original position.

Mrs. Davis then pointed out several fine pieces of furniture in different rooms in the house which had come down to her from the Archer family. These were pieces from Oakwood, some of which had come from David Hunt to Mrs. Archer,--a lovely table, and a bed side console and a beautiful dressing table with graceful mirror and supporting arms of mahogany. I am not sure how these came to Mrs. Davis although one or two pieces came through gifts made by the present Mrs. James Archer, the daughter-in-law of the old man of "spring-chair" fame. This was the Mrs. Archer with whom I had chatted at Beachland a few weeks back, and who had loaned me the Dunbar and Bisland family trees.

Bad-Lily is the name this Mrs. Archer is known in the Davis family. As a young woman, she had let Mrs. Davis's children use her in their games, and frequently she showed a certain stamnia for persecution in these childish efforts which was remarkable. For instance, one day Mrs. Davis had come upon her



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had come upon her children and M. S. Archer while the children were using "Bad Lily's face to paste leaves and petals on her face. Pretty and placid, Bad-Lily lent herself to this curious pass-time with fortitude and indifference to the children's whims. At another time, the children took it into their heads to past paper dolls and and paper costumes to fit them all over Bad-Lily's hair, and Bad-Lily seemed to mind not at all. Just how the name Lily,--Mrs. Archer's first name, had been supplemented by the pre-fix "Bad", wasn't quite clear, although I believe it resulted from a remark Mrs. Davis had made that Lily was bad to let the children maul her in such ways, and thus the children had remarked, in affection, that Lily was bad to let them do this, and shortly she found herself referred to as Bad-Lily as a term of endearment. It flashed through my mind that old Mrs. Nutt's daughter had been named Lily, too, and how one might entitle a little biography with a certain degree of appropriateness:-- "Bad-Lily, Southern Belle and Nutt".

Mrs. Davis called my attention to a particularly handsome four post bed of mahogany, beautifully cared and exquisitely appointed. It had come down to the Davises from Don Jose Vidal, the Spanish Governor of the vast territory which stretch all the way from the Mississippi to the vague uncertainties of what is now New Mexico. When the Davis acquired this bed, it was in a building in Vidalia, across the River from Natchez, and was so solidly cake by mud-daubbers that the posts seemed to be solid blocks of baked mud. In spite of her family's dissuasions, Mrs. Davis insisted that there might be something beneath all this rough exterior, and after days of effort at cleaning the various pieces, this magnificently carved and fluted object of art emerged. It is as handsome a bed of this type as I have ever seen.

But after looking at further treasures, including lovely miniatures, etc., I realized my hour was up, and so after tea, I said good bye, with the hope that I might come back again some day, for Mrs. Davis is a charming woman,--a charming lady,--and withal unique in that she holds up the light of what has gone before as though through its beams one might better understand those times and peoples the better if their virtues and weaknesses struck high reliefs as they chanced to pass before her torch, and that shading and submerging this or that tea cup scandal would in now way help but rather would confuse the major panorama of good which an sympathetic and yet disinterested person might gain from the advantage of falling within the orbit which Mrs. Davis so beautifully describes.

I stopped by Kemp's Bend for a brace before spending a couple of hours with Edith "Yett" Moore, and after six o'clock, I said good bye to her, and took a turn up and down vibrating Franklin Street, chucked full, as always with gay, boisterous, giggling darkies, sleek as cats and playful as kittens. And so for a bite of food at the Coffee Shop and thence to bed and to sleep.

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Tuesday, Oct. 29th, 1940.

Up at 6:30 for a morning Constitutional before breakfast at seven, a quick breakfast, and a rendezvous with Nellie Wailes Brandon, who arrived precisely at the appointed hour of 7:20.

At 7:25 we were aboard the bus, and heading out of Natchez across the Mississippi for Louisiana and home at "elrose.

We spoke much of old B. L. C. Wailes, and how lonely a life he had led as he pursued his geographical and historical pursuits and his unending fight for the life and improvement of Jefferson College. Mrs. Brandon said that the Wailes side of her family had always been interested,--and a little lonely on the domestic front,--because of their interest in public affairs, while B. L. C's wife, the daughter of old Covington, had been the pratical side of the house, had shared little in her husband's enthusiasms, and had formed the pillar of the home around which the children clustered for sympathy and advice, since none of the Wailes children ever understood their father, who to them seemed like a cold, distant person. It was only after B. L. C's son, Levin, married Miss Harper, of Maryland,--Nellie's mother,--that B. L. C. received any human enthusiasm from a member of his family, for after having been a great companion with her own father in Maryland, Mrs. Harper Wailes, on coming to Mississippi, transferred her affections to old B. L. C., and in projecting her love and admiration for him through his protective circle of asuterity, she found that he opened his heart wide to her and in her found much of the solace he always had sought for in vain from his own children.

As for B. L. C's wife, she never read a book in her life, and never exerted any physical energies about her own household. But countering these characteristics, Mrs. B. L. C. read every newspaper from cover to cover, and accordingly was one of the best posted women on current affairs in the Natchez region, while in her household she exhibited such unusual capacity for training servants perfectly, that the Wailes household operated as smoothly and efficiently as any in the community, thanks to Mrs. Wailes organizing ability.

We lunched at Alexandria, and were at Montrose by 2:15, where we found Clyde awaiting our arrival.

It was good to be home again, and to find Aunt Mammie, looking a great deal improved, and bubbling over with enthusiasm, awaiting us in her room, where we all had coffee together.

She told us of the little episodes which had taken place on Cane River since we had left, and of the growing unrest on the part of many of the "elrose darkies to go to Alexandria to work on the Government jobs offered there in the building of the extensive training camps which are being rushed to completion for occupancy before the end of the year.



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We also ran through the mail hurriedly, although not a great deal had accumulated during my absence. One item which I wanted to go into without delay was a new volume on Audubon,--entitled Audubon's America, which contained much from his journal, and quite an array of colored plates of his less well known paintings, including the quadrupeds. But I guess this will have to wait for ever so long, since we seem to have so many other things to accomplish before undertaking that.

It was grand to see Frank again, and it made my heart glow to feel that he reciprocated.

I went over to my house to get out of my street clothes, and into my plantation kaki pants, sport shirt and sweater. The room was heavy with the fragrance of butterfly lilies and a huge bouquet of dahlias balanced the lilies on the other side of the room. Aunt Cammie is grand.

We had supper early in the summer dining room, and afterward chatted for a while in Aunt Cammie's room, and afterward I said good night, gathered up Grandpa and little grandpa and crossed the dark gardens to Lyle's house.

A hot bath, and blazing fire and a volume of Iacolieff's African illustrations. These remarkable paintings from La Croisiere Jaune always appealed to me but twice as much since I have found so many counter parts to the models in this lush Cane River country. Here was Asseline on one page and Allen on another and here was Gabriel, black as a baton noir on a back drop as white as a sheet. Curious how a single human being becomes the symbol of a race and the symbol stands for a whole dark continent. Curious, too, how one work of art in a different age and clime describes such a perfect pattern for another human experience which so perfectly coincides. I reckon Wagner, in writing Tristan und Isolde, little dreamed that Isa would appear in such a variety of roles in subsequent generations and that the Swan, so famous for its snowy loveliness and eerie trumpeting could so easily metamorphosis into jet for coloring and a trumpet for a call.

The clock struck eleven, and it was time to sleep. The day had been such a short one and so many varying scenes and personalities. I slept and dreamed and slept.

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Wednesday, Oct. 30th, 1940.

On awakening this morning, I felt a little tired, quite intimately in tune with all the world and withal as grand as any lotus-eater of old.

One piping hot cup of black Louisiana coffee and Frank to sit beside me for a few moments, and life began again at Melrose.

I banged off a stack of letters before breakfast, and another batch afterwards.

Mrs. Brandon came over to Lyle's to see me before ten o'clock and Aunt Cammie joined us for coffee.

We talked much about B. L. C.'s Diary, and some of the people who figure in it. We spoke particularly of the Gee's.

In his Diary, B. L. C. had indicated that in ante-bellum times the Gee's, who were neighbors of the Wailes family at Fonsylvania, were odd in their relations, not only as remote relatives but as adjacent landholders.

Mrs. Brandon said that after the War was over and B. L. C. was dead and Mrs. Brandon's father, Levin, moved his family to Fonsylvania to live, the Gees continued to manifest rare examples of unneighborliness. An example might be sighted when Levin Wailes purposed to erect fences to keep cattle from tilled fields. As the Gee property adjoined the Wailes property, Levin naturally ran his fence to the fence on Gee's line. But to his surprise, Levin found that his fence, where it joined Gee's was cut each time he joined the fences to a common post. The Gees declared Levin had no right to attach a strand of wire to one of their posts, and in consequence, Levin was always forced to erect another post within an inch or so from the line in order to complete the fence and prevent the cattle from slipping between places where two fences met.

The gees, it appeared had measely minds and in all their contacts with the Wailes family, their stupidity reflected such meanness.

Mrs. Brandon recalled so many little details of her life as a girl at Fonsylvania. She spoke of the companionship she had with her brother's, and how at an early age she had learned to ride and to use a gun, and how constant use of the rifle had developed her marksmanship to a high degree. She also spoke of the great number of flying-squirrels there were at Fonsylvania, and how much damage they did to the shrubs and to provisions stored in the house. It happened that in a pet cat, however, the squirrels found their match, and Mellie Brandon was adroit in encouraging the cat to maintain a limit on the vast numbers of squirrels. It seems that the flying squirrel can "fly" downward only, and starting from the top of a tree, it will glide downward from branch to branch until reaching whatever goal it has in mind. At the side of the plantation house, large stores of nuts were kept at certain seasons of the year, and the flying squirrels would glide down from the tree-tops toward these, unmindful of the cat.



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who sat beneath the branches, and as the squirrels would reach the lowest limbs, the cat would pounce on each as he appeared. Having been trained in the rare art of consuming food with grace,--a somewhat lost art to cats, possibly, this particular one would not eat the squirrel until he had brought it up to the gallery on the second floor of the house where Nellie would be sitting with her sewing. Depositing it at her feet, the cat would sit back until Nellie, her scissors well practiced in this branch of butchery, would slit the skin open from head to toe, and the carcass would slide off. Thereupon the cat would walk off with its prize, and the little skin would be added to Nellie's collection of hides for a thousand uses in those trying times when every morsel which could be assembled for potential use was husbanded with infinite care.

After dinner, we all scattered in opposite directions,--Aunt Cammie to superintend the servants, Mrs. Brandon to turn to her research work in the library, and I over to Zeline's to pay a belated call. I found her not very well. In fact she told me she thought she was going to die before long, and was beginning to wonder what she should do about her little piece of property. But all of this was spoken of as though it were about some third person who wasn't present, and through it all, Zeline was chuckling at her own inability to stick her much longer. She is truly remarkable.

Back home for supper, and afterwards we sat with Aunt Cammie for an hour or two before saying goodnight. At home I sat before my typewriter, batting out a stack of mail, and by ten o'clock, I was asleep.

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*other pages missing*

Up and abroad at a seasonable hour, and far away and over the horizon before eight o'clock in the morning, fortified by two lusty fat sandwiches which Frank had made for me after my early morning coffee.

Some twenty miles from home a couple or three hours later, I ran in to J. D. who was headed toward Melrose, and so I rode back with him, refreshed and invigorated by my flight into fresh air.

There was a r her heavy incoming mail, and together Aunt Cammie and I went through it leisurely,--with particular interest in various clippings covering a variety of subjects of mutual interests. There was a letter from Lyle, too, saying that he would arrive on tonight's train to spend the week-end.

What with the mountain of data I brought back from Natchez with me and the stack of books to be waded through before the end of the year, and all the conversation I want to get tucked in with Mrs. Brandon and Lyle, and the time I want to spend with Aunt Cammie, it looks like a fairly full season. I hope too many of those discontented women from a town, bored to extinction, don't decide too frequently that Aunt Cammie is to be pitied, sitting "way down there in the country all alone by herself with nothing to do", and so use that as a dumb excuse for coming down and cluttering up endless hours with a lot of ridiculous, uninteresting chatter.

After dinner Mrs. Brandon came over to chat with me. We spoke again of life at Fontsylvania. She mentioned the slowness with which news filtered through to the plantation in those years following the War. With the present political campaign now reaching its climax in Roosevelt's attempt at a third crack at the Presidency, Mrs. Brandon recalled how political news regarding the election had come through to Fontsylvania in the old days.

One evening she was at work in the detached kitchen at Fontsylvania when glancing out of the window, she saw one of the boys come riding up from town,--Vicksburg, I suppose, with the semi-weekly mail. Nellie continued with her labors without giving much thought to the arrival of the mail until her mother suddenly tiptoed to the kitchen door, and with a smile called to her daughter, holding out a little glass of wine.

"Come, Nellie," her mother whispered to her daughter. "Let's drink a toast to Mr. Cleveland. America has elected a Democratic President". And there in the doorway of the little brick building the mother and daughter drank the toast, both of them sensing something which neither attempted to express. After all those years of Reconstruction



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Saturday, Nov. 2nd, 1940 - page 1.

I didn't awaken until nearly seven this morning, for Lyle and I had so much talk about last night that it must have been nearly three when Grandpa crossed the gardens and came to rest in my house.

Lyle had bought me a curious rubber hand and rist, as a kind of sop offering in lieu of a brass or plaster hand of which I had spoken to him to have reproduced from the Grace King inheritance of Gayarre's belonging to her after the historian's death.

Lyle had been on a party "aloween, and this rubber hand had played a part in some of the costuming. Lyle had attended the party as Raspoutine. His costume consisted primarily of a priest's garb, much black wig and false whiskers on which mecuricomb had been daubed to give an impression of blood. His companion who arrived with him had assumed the role of "agda Lepescue of Rumania, and her costume had been a red wig, a vile red evening gown and cerisse red shoes. This rubber hand had come in for a part, too, for (interruption) the arm was attached in such manner, so that Lyle, as he arrived in the home of the host, could struggle a bit with his escort, and seemingly mad, rip off the hand just above the wrist, and know at the raw flesh, which in reality was a bit of raw beef-steak attached to the end of the rubber hand.

The thought of getting out of the St. Charles Hotel in such costumes to make one's way to a party must have presented a problem, but on second thought, it probably would astonish few citizens of New Orleans, of "ardi-Gras fame, to catch sight of Raspoutine whiz by in a taxi on the raw beef-steak arm of Magda.

Mrs. Brandon spent much of the morning with me going over her manuscript on "ashington, Miss., and a little before dinner Aunt Cammie joined us for an hour's chat.

Lyle put in an appearance at dinner, and afterward we took a turn to Bill's saloon and back, more or less as a constitutional and as a medium for encountering old friends at the far end of the bridge, of whom we encountered many.

Aunt Cammie and Mrs. Brandon came over to Lyle's for high balls before supper and afterward, we joined Aunt Cammie in her room for an hour before Lyle and I retired to his house to cover a whole flock of social and literary points we had neglected the night before. The evening ended by the literary side, falling away in favor of the social, but that was within Lyle's stride, and by mid-night I said good night, leaving him to finish up whatever unfinished points we hadn't covered jointly.

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Sunday, Nov. 3rd, 1940 - page 1.

Frank arrived a little after six, so that before seven I had done with my breakfast and a stack of mail, and was out in the big road to take a little turn before the household was awake.

Back before eight thirty, I had bathed and shaved, and was awaiting Mrs. Brandon when she arrived about nine o'clock to read from her manuscript to me.

By ten o'clock we had had coffee and resumed our reading before other guests arrived to bog down the rest of the morning completely.

After dinner sister's husband offered to take Mrs. Brandon, Lyle and me for a little turn in the car about the limits of Isle Brevelle.

On our route, we visited the mulatto cemetery of the "elrose Catholic Church,--only recently I have learned that this is named after St. Augustin,--after old Grandpere Augustin "ettoyer,--I reckon, and thence over to "eline's where we found her rather unwell, but withal as gay as ever. She wanted to speak privately in regard to her thought that she was to die soon, and wanted advise regarding the making of a Will, in which she will leave her little property to her husband, Joe, in trust, whence it will pass to her two nephews, Wood Antee and somebody else.

From "eline's we continued on that side of the River, passing the old "anner house, and so on to Bermuda, where we re-crossed Cane River, returning to "elrose after a couple of hours absence.

Sister and her husband returned home shortly afterward, and Mrs. Brandon joined Aunt Cammie in her room, while Lyle and I retired to his house for much conversation and a "collation".

A little after four, Lyle took some books he had autographed under his arm, and started for the big house, thinking he would invite Aunt Cammie and Mrs. Brandon over. Frank was at the house, - Lyle's talking with me about some current problem which loomed rather large in his mind, thanks to a bit of the "collation" which Lyle had insisted on his having.

But before Lyle had reached the big house, he encountered a couple of pilgrims and was back on the gallery of his house, calling to me. I stepped out, and found him with a fine tall looking youth and a rather diminutive young woman, dressed in a Scottish mode, with the dress carrying out the idea of kilts and the cape falling from her shoulders down to her waist. Lyle made the presentations, and somehow from the tone, I gathered he felt that this was something I shouldn't miss. The name of the youth I do not recall. The young lady's name was Mary Belle de Vargas,--which didn't mean a thing to me.



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Lyle invited them in, and for a while we chatted in the library, with Miss de Vargas sitting on the big sofa, and Lyle sitting along opposite, while the youth and I stood before the fire place in animated conversation all the way round.

Frank was mixing highballs.

I didn't notice anything especial as the tray made its rounds, passing first to Miss de Vargas, then to Lyle, then the youth and lastly to me. It was accordingly something of a surprise when glancing in Miss de Vargas' direction a few moments later, I noticed she was sipping her drink from the big glass which she was holding in the firm grasp of her foot.

I lighted a Murad and went on with the conversation, but was impressed as I saw Miss de Vargas, whom I now discovered had no arms at all, sat her glass down, and with her bare toes, daintily plucked a gay little handkerchief with her toes from the side of the shoe on her other foot, and with all the grace in the world, gently dried her lips with her unshod foot,--the slipper of which stood empty beside her other shod foot.

I figured this must be the "atchitoches girl who had accomplished so many things in spite of her handicap,--writing on a typewriter, sewing, washing, painting pictures, etc., etc.

The guests staid for half an hour, and Lyle and I accompanied them to the front gate where their car was waiting for them. We chatted for a few moments before saying goodby, and then, after posing for a picture which the youth wanted to take of the other three, we said au-revoir. At this moment, I was somewhat amazed when Miss de Vargas, who was standing directly in front of me, deftly slipped her right foot from her slipper and extended her bare toes up-ward and out-ward in the direction of my hand. I grabbed at it lustily and shook it with pseudo enthusiasm. That old popular tune of several seasons back ran through my mind: "I kiss your hand, Madame",--but under the circumstances I didn't.

I saw Frank a few minutes before supper, and he told me that he knew Miss Mary Belle good. He said that as children they had both lived near each other just outside "atchitoches, and that they used to play together. He said she was a nice lady. XI I thought she was remarkable, but that foot shaking business was a little different than anything I had encountered before.

Upper alone,--Aunt Cammie, Mrs. B., Lyle and I, and an hour or two of conversation afterward, after which Lyle and I retired to his house for three or four hours before saying goodnight.

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Monday, Nov. 4th, 1940 - 1940 - page 1.

The fine weather continues unabated.

Mrs. Brandon came over to my house for coffee.. We talked about Washington personalities of ante-bellum times.

So many of the people appearing in her Grandfather's Diary survived in themselves or in her mother's memory, that Mrs. Brandon can recall many points which weren't recorded in print.

I think I have referred to Dr. Monette's sudden fits of temper elsewhere. I don't know if I mentioned the fact that his children seemed to inherit their father's weakness for flying off the handle so readily,--all expect Miss Lulu Monette. I am not sure if I mentioned that Dr. Monette's son, Leonard had married and begot several children, while living on a plantation in the region of Lake St. John Louisiana, and how he became a widower there after the war, and rode over to Pennsylvania when Nellie Wailes was a girl, in hopes of taking her for his second wife,--and how she had demurred because she declared to him that she was frightened of the epidemics of malaria in Louisiana, whereas in reality she hadn't the vaguest notion of marrying a widower and of all people, one with such a temper as all the Monette's were reputed to have.

Mrs. Brandon also spoke of her uncle, Leonard Wailes, who in his declining years lived in New Orleans. There she had visited him and his family frequently. In his later years, Leonard had lost his hearing, and in consequence had more than once suffered accidents in the city because of this. The family felt that he should not be allowed to go out alone, and they accordingly kept him locked in the house. He resented this and always prayed Nellie to deliver a note to the Sheriff of New Orleans for him, complaining that he was being restrained without his consent, although no alienist had ever pronounced him incompetent. It was all very trying, Mrs. Brandon said.

At dinner there was much talk about politics and how tomorrow's election would come out, and if Roosevelt could succeed in being elected for a third term,--which would of course be something new in the annals of American history.

In the afternoon Lyle and I spent several hours talking in his house. He said that he wouldn't dare confess it to his friends, who would laugh at him for such an idea, but that he didn't mind telling me that he sometimes felt as though a certain life pattern were deployed for one at one period of his life in preparation for another similar pattern which would appear and be the clearer and more comprehensible at a later time.



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He said that this might possibly explain why I had so avidly read French memoirs of the 17th and 18th century as a child, as a kind of preparation for my interest in a similar interest in later years when I should encounter similar data of another era in France, so far removed from the Ile de France of my earlier enthusiasms.

In the evening, we walked down to Pills's saloon for a drink, and on our return, Lyle decided that he must return to New Orleans early in the morning,--on the six o'clock train. He wasn't sure if he had told Frank about this, and it would be well for Frank to know about it, in order that things might get under way at a seasonable hour. I accordingly volunteered to walk back toward Cane River to tell Frank about these plans.

And so while Lyle joined the ladies, I crossed the cotton patch, fairly well lighted by the budding moon and shortly reached Frank's house on the banks of Cane River. There was a light within. Outside, the dog growled as I approached the house. As I put my foot on the first step, the dog bit me just below my knee. I shook him off and continued but he grabbed me again on the ankle. Frank certainly has a good watch dog alright. Having heard the scuffle, Frank opened his door, expressed surprise to see me and at the same time drove off the dog, making my entrance into Frank's little cabin less impeded.

Frank's wife greeted me with a cheery: "Good night",--an expression which never fails to register when I am expecting someone to say good evening, but since evening is from 12 o'clock noon until sun-down in these parts, I suppose "Good night" is about the only term left.

There are two beds in this main room of the cabin. May and Frank's little boy were already tucked in one. Frank and his wife would be in the adjoining one shortly. Frank was a little tight and insisted on examining my leg where his dog had got his teeth into the flesh. There was blood, but Frank said it was alright. I was re-assured in a way.

Frank told his wife to make coffee, but I explained that they were awaiting me at the big house, and that I must run along, and so Frank walked half way across the cotton patch with me, assured me that he would awaken Mr. Lyle by five o'clock in the morning, and so we said good night.

Back home,, I joined the circle in Aunt Cammie's room for an hour, when Lyle and I, fortified with a good supply of ice, retired to his house. He examined my leg, and treated it with alcohol and boric acid, and we both undertook some internal some internal beverages as a stimulant.

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We listened to the radio for a couple of hours,--the final pre-election program of the Democratic Committee. Alexander Woolcott's speech seemed especially good, as did Roosevelt's and Dorothy Thompson's.

Windsor came up for consideration, but in view of the early hour at which we should have to arise in the morning, I said good night at 11:30 and Grandpa and I retired to our house, and hence to sleep.



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Tuesday, Nov. 5th, 1940 - pge 1.

It was a little after five o'clock and still dark when Frank arrived with coffee. He said Mr. Lyle would be read by twenty minutes to six.

I was, too, and waiting for him in the back gallery, for a heavy dew or incipient sprinkle,--I could make out which,--was dripping from the skies.

Glyde was waiting for us at the store, and in the half light of the gray dawn we said goodbye to J. H. who was there, and off we drove for Derry, to put Lyle on his train which would take him to New Orleans by one o'clock.

The train nearly forgot to stop,--I reckon Mrs. Murphy the agent must have forgotten to signal that there were passengers, but eventually it did stop, and Lyle and another passenger clambored aboard, and off the train disappeared into the gray mist.

Back home, I found Frank had a nice fire going in my fireplace to take off the dampness and a well-laden tray of breakfast awaiting my return.

I dashed off a lot of mail and by ten o'clock was ready for Mrs. Brandon's morning visit. Aunt Cammie had planned to vote early in the morning,--whenever it was convenient for J. H. to go and vote, and so we scarcely expected her to join us.

At dinner, however, we were surprised to learn that she hadn't voted, although she had dressed and gone to the store, in anticipation of the trip to ontrose to cast her ballot. J. H., however, had told her on her arrival at the store that her vote wouldn't count, and so she had returned home, chuckling under the joke that her son thought he was playing on her. But of course one must admit that she didn't vote, so possibly the joke was impregnated with a practical side if J. H. hoped that "like rather than Roosevelt might swing the election.

In the afternoon, I ran over to Z line's to take her some medicine. I didn't find her feeling very well, although she was up and sweeping, and as always ready for a slight chuckle.

interruption.- In the evening, I ran up against the blank wall of tangent flying in negro reasoning. I couldn't fathom it and got nowhere. Later returns ~~xxxxxx~~ began coming in, so that by ten or eleven o'clock it appeared that Mr. Roosevelt had in fact succeed in wifing the presidential election, this being the list time in history anyone was ever elected to the office for a third term.

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Wednesday, Nov. 6th, 1940.

Up by six, and in the big road well before seven, with a little breakfast under my arm which Frank had prepared for me while on my walk.

But my journey was finished before ten o'clock and I was home in time to run through the mail with Aunt Cammie before Mrs. Brandon joined me.

We spoke of things Natchez, Mrs. B. and I, but on one point I wasn't as enlightened as Mr. I might have been, I felt. For Mrs. B., seemed reticent about speaking of Gerard Brandon's role in acting as legal representative of the mulatto child,--of his mother's former cook at Brandon Hall, in the settlement of the Nutt estate, in which young Haller Jr., had stipulated by his will, probated shortly after he died at the age of 21, that his share of the Nutt fortune should go to this mulatto child, although he did not name it as his. As I understand it, Mississippi as a State would not recognize the marriage if one had been performed,--and I am not certain on the point as to whether it had been celebrated, but there was nothing in the law to prevent the child of color from accepting a gift as made,--not by a father who was white,--but merely as a gift from an acquaintance or friend.

After dinner, we spoke of a little tour we might make about Washington, Miss., and before we were finished with the agenda, we had come to the conclusion that perhaps we might as well make it tomorrow, when we would take Mrs. Brandon home to Natchez, and as her guests, visit some of the places in the neighborhood of her birthplace of the former capitol of Mississippi.

I retired rather early in the evening, for I had many little odds and ends I wanted to attend to before leaving. Then, too, there were certain mental processes I wanted to explore further for my reasoning of the night before had confused many things in my mind. I explored these and yet last night's confusion was still as pronounced tonight, and ultimately I retired to sleep without having unravelled any of them satisfactorily.



*Trip to Natchez*

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Up and doing a little after six, with a flock of letters out of the way before bathing and breakfasting, and so over to the big house a little before eight o'clock where I found Aunt Cammie and Mrs. Brandon down stairs and ready for our start to Natchez.

It was a clear day and cool with just enough autumn tang in the air to be bracing.

Fugabou was at the side gate waiting for us with the Lincoln,--a good car for running up mileage without wear and tear on the travelers but not especially good, because of its size, for leaping over forgotten plantation wood roads where our travels are likely to take us.

We clipped along the highways at a good speed and reached Natchez before noon, although we would have made it a little sooner if we had not stopped for food at Ferriday in order to avoid dining in Natchez where we wished to avoid seeing friends and thus get tangled up in a lot of social activities for which we had no inclination during these two busy days. Besides I felt extremely under par, thanks to a headache with which I had awakened this morning.

We stopped in Natchez only long enough for Mrs. Brandon to do a little shopping, during which we remained parked on a side street,--Aunt Cammie, Fugabou and I. Mrs. Brandon was gone over half or three quarters of an hour, and as we sat there, panicky for fear some one would pass whom we might know, we caught sight of an old nag galloping along at a curious pace coming over the rise of pavement on Jefferson Street. In the buggy which the old steed drew sat Miss Beatrice and Miss Maude Stanton. Thank heavens they turned into the side street just before reaching us, and accordingly failed to bog down in our midst.

Eventually Mrs. Brandon returned. It seems she had somehow encountered her husband's cousin,--Gerard Brandon, the lawyer, who insisted that she accompany him to his office to sign a flock of papers in settlement of some minor estate in Texas. Of course there is a time and place for everything, but in this instance, our ideas did not coincide precisely with Gerard's.

But a little after one o'clock, we were under way again, heading directly out St. Catherine's Street toward Washington. As we approached the former capitol of Mississippi, Mrs. Brandon pointed out many of the spots along the route where distinguished citizens in ante-bellum days had lived, but all of these place along the 7 miles route have disappeared now,--save for those one encounters on approaching the limits of the town itself.

As we drew near to Washington, our first stop was at the

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Affleck home, at the end of a plantation road ~~xxxx~~ running from the main highway some 500 yards to the left.

Once the property of Isaac Dunbar, it was given to his only daughter, who married the famous botanist, Editor and agriculturist, Dr. Affleck. The house is ample and elegant, although not huge, set in a grove of moss draped cedars, and in ante-bellum times the famous Affleck gardens slopped away from the house to the West,--a marvel of rare plants, and shrubs, box-bordered walks and flowering plants and trees which were famous through out the South. On the front gallery, charming in its proportion with the rest of the building, we found ~~xxxx~~ Madame Mesdames Rollins,--a young woman rather thirty-ish and her mother-in-law, I believe, in her sixties. They were kindly and cordial, although obviously quite in the dark as to what this famous old place stood for ~~inx~~ as a monument to the intellectual and cultural development of the great South West.

The entrance to the house is arresting,--an impressive portal, with splendid side lights and a unique fan light over the great door. Within, a large hall broken by a gracefully curved arch runs through to the back of the house. At the far end of the hall, an lovely staircase, curving and restrained, leads to the second floor. On either side of this hall are elegant drawing rooms,--splendid marble mantles and beautiful medallions in the ceiling. The great windows opening on to the front gallery from these front drawing rooms have gib-doors, so that at will the windows may in reality become doors if one chooses.

Outside, we ~~xxxx~~ walked around to either side of the house. There were remains of fluted columns rotting on the ground and a number of large stationary blinds flat on the ground,--possibly having fallen from the windows, and allowed to ~~ix~~ disintegrate where they landed. With the ground falling away as one approached the rear of the house, one noticed a large basement opened at the rear of the house. This needed repairing at the corners where the bricks were starting to crumble away. At the rear of the house and to the right, one saw the ruins of a large wing which formerly had projected toward the gardens on that side. All that remained of this wing were the foundations and a huge chimney and fireplace, gaunt against the sky. The house itself still seems to be in a fair state of preservation, although one can but wonder how long this distinguished old home will linger on, what with the hazards of times,--I suppose it was built over 110 years ago, and the lack of interest of subsequent owners.

From the Affleck home, we returned to the main road, and ran into the outskirts of Washington, driving in at the Wales home. Hidden away in its grove of live-oaks well screened by the Methodist church on the highway, Mead Villa, as this place was known, is as historic a landmark as in any in Mississippi,--not because of any event that happened there but because it was the home of old P. L. C. Wailles, the most distinguished citizen Mississippi ever could claim as her own. It was good to be



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Mrs. Brandon, too, because with her one felt the glories of ante-bellum days much more intimately, since she has known and loved this place so long.

It was here in the upper bed room on the right, that Mrs. Brandon, was born in 1863, about a year after B. L. C. had died in the same house. Mrs. Brandon's father and mother,-- Levin Wailes and his wife,--nee Harper,--had moved down to Washington after their plantation house, the Wilderness on the Morgantown road some three miles away had burned down.

Standing before the house, Mrs. Brandon indicated the arrangement of the household at the time her grandfather, B. L. C., lived there. In those days, there was the central house, with a little house to the right and left of the main structure,--and these smaller houses were attached to the central one by a little gallery on the front and a similar gallery running across the back of the three units at the rear.

Of the main house, the room to the left was the dining room, and to the right the living room. It was in the latter room that Mrs. Brandon's mother had been so frightened one day when a naked Indian suddenly entered, bedecked only in loin cloth and flamboyant head dress. Mrs. Levin Wailes was sitting in a corner of the room sewing. The Indian stalked directly to the mantle piece over which was suspended a mirror. Looking at himself steadily in the glass, he observed with evident satisfaction: "Too pretty much", and without other formality, turned and walked from the house.

Mrs. Brandon pointed to the upper bed room, giving us on the ~~xxx~~ double gallery,--the room immediately above the dining room. This was the bed room of B. L. C. and his wife. The bed room to the right,--and immediately over the sitting room was occupied by members of the Wailes family,--who ever chanced to be living at the house,--Levin or Leonard, the two sons of the household, or distinguished guests. It was in this room that Nellie Wailes Brandon was born, as mentioned above.

Returning to an account of the lay out of the house, Mrs. Brandon pointed out the spot to the left of the house where one of the wings had formerly been. This was the office and cabinet of B. L. C. Wailes, and this was the place he kept his pet turtle for six months until it died. To the right of the main house, the wing still stands,--although it is greatly dilapidated. This wing has two rooms, with a central fireplace going up in the center of the rooms,--or rather a chimney rising between the two rooms, giving a fireplace on to either room. It was in this wing that B. L. C.'s daughter, Felician,--later Mrs. Payne Green of Gayoso, and his niece,-- Sue C. Livingston made their private apartments.

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We went up on the front gallery to be greeted by a young woman,--I believe a great grand niece of B. L. C. She is of course well acquainted with Mrs. Brandon, and she received us kindly and asked us to come in. Before entering, however, we noted the outside stair case to the right of the main building, leading from the lower to the upper gallery. It was an addition constructed in recent years, since the former staircase, on the back gallery, has become un-safe, and it seemed cheaper, I suppose to leave the original one in its crumbling condition and build this new one on the front gallery.

Inside we noted the chimney pieces, for the four fireplaces in this section of the house,--two below and two above, are exact duplicates of the ones in Connolly's Tavern on Ellicott's Hill in Natchez. As the latter building was constructed in the 18th century, there is the suggestion that this Wailes house may have been of about the same period. No one has ever found any other duplicates of these fireplaces in other houses in the Natchez region.

Another feature of the Wailes house which is distinctive is the curve in the ceilings of both the front and back galleries on the second story. These ceilings curve from two to three feet, starting from the wall of the main house and curving downward in both cases toward the outer edge of the gallery. Someone said something about this being a feature of the old ship's carpenter's handiwork, so frequently bearing mute evidence in one feature or another of the early houses in the Natchez region when carpenters experienced in boat building came to this locality to practice their trade on domestic structures.

I scrambled up the steep narrow stairs to the attic,--a long open space running the entire length of the main house,--noting the huge chimneys at either end of this open space,--chimneys which seem as solid and substantial as the day they were laid. I noted to little windows on either side of these chimneys.

These recalled an episode to Mrs. Brandon. It seems that during the Confederate War, the Wailes family and its servants, numbered twelve,--a staggering number in view of the scarcity of food, and the hunger which haunted the household, since every time food was acquired, Federal troops would descend on the household from across the road where they were stationed on the grounds of Jefferson College and clean out the provisions of the Wailes household.



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And not only did the Yankees make periodic tours of the houses in Washington to clean out the food, but they also made the same rounds to appropriate the drinking water. One day a group of these soldiers appeared at the Wailes house and started to pump the cistern dry. It was at that moment, that a little pickanney's head appeared from the attic window and shouted to the soldiers to beware of the water as it was bad and would make them sick. This was enough for these brave fellows and they retreated without emptying the cistern, so that the inhabitants of the house still had some drinking water. I had intended to say that the family had cast eyes to Heaven when "Ellie's father, Levin, had added these two little darkies to the Wailes household of a dozen, feeling that it was nip and tuck if the members of the family would survive this period of starvation, but since the parents of these poor little darkies had been freed, they had left their children to shift for themselves in Washington and had followed to Army to Natchez where they thought that the promise of the Vote meant luxuries and ease the rest of their lives.

Some time after the War the Washington property passed out of the hands of the Wailes family, for old B. L. C. had died in 1862 and his wife could scarcely hope to eek out an existence at Washington.

Returning to the front of the house, we passed around to the left side, noticing the crumbling little portico on the West side of the wing occupied formerly by Feliciano and S. C. Covington. Further around to the rear, we examined the fine two story brick kitchen, still apparently in good condition, although both floors at present seem to be reserved for chickens and porkers. In antebellum times, the kitchen was one point of a half-moon of out-buildings and cabins which circled some yards behind the big house. Save for the kitchen building, all these have since disappeared. Beyond their emplacements ran fields toward the wood, where Nellie Wailes Brandon and "agruder Drake erected the monuments to Levin Wailes, B. L. C., their wives, and children who were buried in this remote spot.

Back to the front of the house again, we visited the little bayou just to the right of the big house,--a bayou that lies just behind the Methodist Church. Here we noted many stones of various types, including pieces of petrefied wood. These are from the collection of B. L. E. Wailes, once housed in his office in the big house, but subsequently consigned to their present place by careless hands. Thank Heaven some of his other collections, including his writing, met a somewhat happier fate.

From the Wailes home, issue so many souvenirs of Washington in its great days that it seems a pity this noble old place should

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it seems a great pity that it should slowly decay into oblivion. Some years ago it was purchased,--with its 80 odd acres by a Mrs. "ess of Natchez. She paid two thousand five hundred dollars for it. A little later, "agruder Drake offered her three thousand dollars for it, but she refused to sell it, saying that of all her investments it caused her the least trouble. She certainly hasn't been troubled by repairing the place that is one thing certain. I must write to "agruder to see if he will not make another try at acquiring it. As I understand it, "agruder is rated at two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and as he has not children I should think he might adopt this fine old property.

After saying good by to the simple folk now living at Meade Villa, we journey outside the town of Washington to Selma plantation, the old home of the Brandon family, now owned by the Abbott family, and tenanted by poor kindly people. I'm uncertain of the date of this fine old plantation home, but I suppose it to be of the early 1800's. It stands on a hill side, far from the main road, and over looks a little valley or bayou. The long building is two and a half stories in height,--a basement, a main floor and an upper floor with projecting dormers from the roof. The gallery runs across the entire front. The main door opens into a large living room, with fireplaces of generous size, and of a depth the width of the house. Both to the right and left of this great room,--and so at the ends of the house, are rooms balancing each other, and generously fitted with closets, etc. There is a gallery running across the entire back of the house, too, and from this gallery are two stair cases, at either end, but within the enclosure of the gallery itself, which lead up stairs. We didn't ascend, as we were told that there were youths sleeping up there at that time,--young men who work in the tire factory in "atchez. One of these passed by as we chatted on the back gallery. Our host made presentations, but the youth didn't condescend to slow up his pace as he moved along. The old mansion of Governor Brandon seemed to shudder a little at the thought of his old ancestral home having fallen into the hands of such unlikely guests. It depressed me a little, too.

The out-buildings of Selma were at one time famous, representing a unique outlay of various units such as smoke house, loom room, kitchens, carriage houses, tannery, etc., but all of these have now disappeared, although several people still living can recall them readily. I must have a little map of these for inclusion with this Journal. Fearing that the life of Selma might experience other alterations and vicissitudes, we took some photographs, although what the success may be is problematical, since the house faces the East, and it was now after three o'clock. And so we said Goodby to Selma, and headed back toward Washington, but without entering the town, headed up the cement highway toward the old empire of the "ogetts, for I wanted Aunt Cammie to see Traveler's Rest. We saw it, but it, too faced the East, and so no pictures could be taken, but sooner or later we must record that extraordinary dog-trot.



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And so back toward Washington, we headed down the Duck Pond Road, and clipped along through four or five miles of traces toward Dunbarton Plantation, where I wanted Aunt Cammie to see the old Martha Willis Dunbar place and the delicious little brick house where Clyborne had written his History of Mississippi. We found no one about the place, although this did not deter us from exploring the special object of our visit. We took a couple of photographs of it, for a record of such buildings seems imperative at such times as these when present day owners have such a vague idea of the history these buildings represent. The little building I have described elsewhere, a little building of brick with a big chimney almost covering one side of it while the only windows are in the side opposite that occupied by the fireplace. The door enters on the side between. I peeped within. It was in vast disarray,--an old iron bed with questionable bed coverings in commotion. Some odds and ends,--a bucket of corn, some hoes and whatnot cluttered up the rest of the room. It was a mess.

As we were taking the last picture, the woman who lives in the modern house replacing the old mansion of Dunbarton Plantation appeared. She seemed friendly and didn't seem to mind the poking around we had been up to.

We were delighted when the woman told us that a picture of the place in its original state was in existence and had been used as an illustration in the Pink Papers. For myself, I couldn't remember this picture, but at a moment later we were slightly jarred when the woman further elucidated by saying that the picture bore the title of The Forest. Curious how people's minds work. The picture of the Forest does appear in The Pink Papers. It is a picture, not of Dunbarton but of The Forest, the home of Sir William Dunbar, on the Forest plantation, some 8 or 10 miles from Dunbarton.

But setting the woman right did not seem to be one of the pressing problems of the moment, and so we thanked her for her kindness, and again sped back toward Washington, keeping to the left fork of the road and thus passing old Trinity Plantation house, and so to the outskirts of Washington where we drove in the gate at Sweet Auburn, the delicious residence of the famous Dr. John Westley Monette. Many of the great live oaks in the park still stand, and at the right of the house the ample artificial lake still reflects the beauty of the trees and from one point catches the main house with its two neat little detached houses on either side of the central structure.

We left the car at the second gate and walked up the little brick pavement leading directly to the front gallery, running across the entire front of the house. As I knocked at the door, I was

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Thursday, Nov. 7th, 1940 - page 8. Sweet Auburn.

I was impressed by the beauty of the opening,--the trim double doors, flanked on either side by smart side lights, with a beautiful fan light spreading above the door and side light. It was appalling that some recent occupant of the house had displaced the bad taste of installing a huge thermometer, some five or six feet high on the right hand side of the entrance.

The door opened and our host, Mr. Atcliff, received us kindly. He knew that Dr. Monette had written books, although I think he had little enthusiasm for the house other than its utilitarian aspects. We stepped into the wide central hall that cuts through the home. An elegant arch broke the line half way down the hall, at the far end of which a restrained staircase mounted to the second floor. As we hesitated for a moment to note the classic features of this room, I recalled the episode which had happened here in the early 1840's. Balancing the famous Dr.'s great erudition, was a temper, always inclined to be explosive and often bordering on loss of control. Mrs. Monette, on the contrary, was always calm and composed.

One morning, just before starting for town on horseback, the Dr. bade Mrs. Monette good by as she stood on the front gallery, kissing her affectionately and waving a cheery adieu. As he started down the great oak avenue, Mrs. Monette turned and entered the house. But scarcely inside, she was amazed to hear the clatter of horses feet on the gallery and in glancing over her shoulder, saw the Dr. in a state of furry ride rough-shod straight into the hall. In a rage, he shouted at her that she had ignored his remark to her, after starting down the avenue, that he had forgotten to provide himself with a fresh handkerchief. For a few moments the torrent of abuse volleyed and swelled, but Mrs. Monette, in complete control of her nerves, waited until he was done and then with devastating coolness remarked:

"You know perfectly well I didn't hear you call to me after you had ridden away. Why in the world should I have ignored you?"

The outward composure broke over the seething physician like a bucket of ice water, and snapped him back to reasonableness. Instantly he dismounted from his steed, implored his wife pardon, and without waiting for the fresh handkerchief, humbly led his horse from the hall of Sweet Auburn, and re-mounting, rode away.

Our host spoke at great length about Dr. Monette's famous two volume History of Mississippi. I reckon he thought we had never heard of it. He said Dr. McCain of Jackson had promised to provide him with a set of this long-out-of-print item, published in 1846. Every one agrees that it is one of the great books on the history



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on the Mississippi River. We have a copy at Elrose which I have turned through often enough, but never yet have I met anyone who ever read the book.

But I suppose Dr. Monette, if he ever does come into his own, will probably be even more renowned for his theories and his pamphlets, for he was the first, after extensive study of Yellow Fever, to recommend isolation and quarantine,--the wisdom of which was proved so thoroughly a little over a half century after his death. And it must be remembered, too, that Dr. Monette enunciated the same theory on the Species which ~~was~~ 20 or 30 years later Darwin was to offer to the world as his own, and thus become world famous as the original theorist on the monkey-to-man idea.

In view of his distinguished attainments, it seems doubly regrettable that Dr. Monette should have been subject to such ~~it~~ flights into fury as most certainly characterized his brief but brilliant career. Here is an episode which has never been set down in writing before. It was confided to me by "ellie" Wailes Brandon, whose grandfather, B.L.C. Wailes was Dr. Monette's neighbor.

One day one of B. L. C's servants plucked some fruit from one of Dr. Monette's trees. Shortly afterward, Dr. Monette rushed over to Mr. Waile's home and complained bitterly about the matter, declaring he would like to administer a rebuke to "r. Waile's servant with his own hands. Mr. Wailes, a calm and rather reserved man noticed the youth in the yard as Dr. Monette was speaking. Pointing to the culprit, "r. Wailes, after apologizing for his servant's misdemeanor, told Dr. Monette that if he would feel more compensated, he might administer justice himself rather than permitting the servant's master to do so. Dr. Monette jumped at the opportunity, and rushing out of the house, picked up a switch and began belaboring the surprised youth. For a few moments, "r. Wailes, from his window, observed the punishment Dr. Monette was administering. But within a short time, "r. Wailes was shocked to notice that as Dr. Monette continued to apply the switch to the darkie, the Dr.'s fury was rising with each stroke of the switch, and with the mounting of his anger to fury, the darkie was being being beaten beyond all bounds of reason. At this point, "r. Wailes took a hand in the matter. Going out into the garden, he preemptorily order Dr. Monette to stop. Dr. Monette wilted at the command. "r. Wailes in a frigid manner remarked: "I had no objection to complying with your unexpected request to punish my own servant. But your temper has led you to violate good neighborliness and sheer humanitarianism. I must ask you and insist that you consider this matter close".

"r. "ailes' authoritative manner apparently snapped Dr. Monette's over-wrought nerves back into balance. He apologized to "r. Wailes, and departed at once.

Of Dr. Monette's four children, I believe that none of them

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inherited their father's brilliancy, although, with the possible exception of Miss Lulu, who never married, I believe all the children tended to display their father's temper. I know this was true in the case of the daughter who married the distinguished plantation physician of Washington, Miss,--Dr. Brandon. Dr. Monette's son who later became a physician in New Orleans, inherited many of his father's papers, and these were later sold by his son,--and Dr. J. W.'s grandson, to some Northern University,--possibly the University of Wisconsin.

But returning to Sweet Auburn, we were ushered into the drawing room at the left of the entrance hall. It was a pleasant room, with lovely fire place and distinguished woodwork. The plaster had fallen from places in the ceiling. Repairs are in order, although these items are taken care of slowly at Sweet Auburn, I gather, although an abasence of funds, as I understand it, is not the reason for attention to such details..

We learned from "r. Batliff that there was illness in the house at the present time,--it couldn't be his wife, as she is a Christian Scientist, but under these circumstances, we felt it better to visit other rooms in the home at a later time. Back on the front gallery, we noted the peculiar chocolate color of the bricks of which Sweet Auburn is built, and the little houses some 30 to 40 feet to right and left of the large house, and constructed of the same material. One of these little houses in Dr. Monette's time had served as his office,--I believe the one at the right, while the one at the left had served as his study where he had done most of his writing.

But the afternoon was waning, and we had another stop to make in Washington, and so we said goodbye to our host and drove back to town.

Jefferson College was our destination, and here we were kindly and cordially recieved by "rs. Prospere, under whose supervision this military establishment operates at the present time, her husband, who formerly was the President, having been killed a year or two back by an explosion of a torch in the basement of the building.

Mrs. Prospere is a tall, well proportioned lady, with studied manners and beautiful white hair. Her voice is striking, the quality rather good and well pitched, but some how seemingly managed with the same care that she exercises over her choice of words and fashion in which she enunciates them. Behind all these unimportant eccentricities, one must keep in mind that with her husband's death, Mrs. Prospere took over the responsibility of operating Jefferson College successfully,--which she has done,--and educating her two sons,--I guess her husband must have died earlier than I had thought at first,--and her sons are now educated, and Mrs. Prospere continues the operation of the college to the evident satisfaction of the trustees, all of which are considerations that force



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one to bow before her accomplishments. My only regret is the disappointment I experienced every time I glanced at her, for her smart and conservative dark dress of some non-descript material was a shocking disappointment, for the lady's manner and mannerisms entitled her to nothing short of cascades of chinchilla, waves of velvet and endless ropes of pearls.

In the reception room at the extreme left of the great brick building, various pieces of rather uninteresting furniture were offered for our delectation. None of them were vaguely delectable, however, and from this part of the building we moved into the dining hall where the flags of many nations decorated the walls. These flags are from the countries whence present students hailed, and central America seemed heavily represented,--Cuba and the islands, Honduras, etc., etc. The tables were neatly set for 79 students in attendance. The linen was snowy white and the silver shone. Something about the arrangement or the atmosphere of the place reminded me of the dining saloon on a liner..

From the dining room we continued our progress, passing into the gymnasium, the ground floor of the central or newer portion of this single unit, which original was made of two buildings only, at the extreme right and left, with the addition of this third section, uniting the two former units in later years. It was just a big gymnasium, and that's about all I can say for it. From there we passed into a corridor leading to the oldest of the three units,--the one on the extreme right, as one faces the facade. Here we were ushered into what is known as the "library,"--two adjoining rooms, containing several hundred volumes, but without any comfortable chairs or great reading tables, or anything to give the place any atmosphere save that of a store room where bound volumes are stored.

I had particularly hoped to see the famous Snake book, but it appeared that would require a serpentine route to attain. There was much talk about an old safe in one corner, and a display of how the thing operated, etc., etc. We explained that at Melrose we had the duplicate of this old Spanish contraption, but that didn't seem to deter Madam Prospere's determination to go through her speal to the end. Inside I had supposed the snake book might be housed, since it is probably one of the rarest and most valuable from a collectors point of view of any book in America, but the Military Mistress explained that this safe housed the minutes of the Board meetings.

Our attention was then called to various collections of sets and whatnot on the shelves,--Audubon's Birds, and another interesting group of volumes containing full page illustrations of birds, fishes, insects, flowers, etc., all in each volume by themselves.

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In the center of the second room, housing these books stood a small table, possibly two by three feet, with two old shabby volumes covering the top of the table completely. Being in the center of such a small space, one could scarcely miss knocking against the table in moving from one side of the room to the other, and easily enough up-set in table, and spilling the two old volumes resint on the talbe. The volumes looked as though they had been spilled plenty of times.

Madam Prospere flipped back the cover on one of these volumes, remarking that these were the Sanke books. I nearly gasped. She said they were considered a very valuable set, and she flipped over the hand-colored plates with gusto. I quaked within. Certain plates had been torn some four or five inches in from the edge. Shethumbed along determinedly to find a big design to point out to us. My thoughts flew back to the iron safe in the corner, housing the minutes of the Board meetings, and here were these priceless volumes like a cyclone.

According to the "library of Congress, no other copy of this rare work exists in America. Whether the only other known copy in the British Museum still exists, I suppose no one knows and porbably will not learn until after the Nazi's are done bobmbing London off the face of the earth.

As I understand it, the author and illustrator of these famous volumes was commission late in the 18th century to go to India to study the various kinds of reptiles there, and after an extensive labor, the author-artist return from the East with these astonishing hand colored plates. I suppose the original edition was extremely limited, and of course there was never a second edition. Madam Prospere thought the books had been appraised at \$500.00 some fourty years ago. She thought they must be worth much more now. I should imagine. I'll bet she wouldn't leave even a mere six hundred dollars flying around on the top of that little talbe, were it in coin or bank notes. I don't know why she could treat such rare merchandise as this unique set with so much abandon.

But enough of Jefferson College for today. We eventually said goodbye, and drove back toward Natchez, making the return trip by the old Morgentown Road, thus passing old "r. Kibbe's plantation,--old "r. Kibbe who three times purposed to Eliza Lloyd Magruder and got turned down every time, and thence along to road to the Wilderness Plantation, where Mrs. Brandon's mother and father had lived until the Civil War knocked everything out of joint.

The gin at the Wilderness had burned in 1861, in July, and the old plantation house had burned in July of 1862. Most of



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better pieces of furniture had been rescued as the house burned, and Mrs. Brandon's father and mother had placed it in a large Dairy and loom house temporarily, and slept in the open on the night following the fire. In a day or so, they moved the furniture into a vacant house in Washington, where they went to live with B. L. C. Wailes at Meade Villa. Mr. Wailes died that autumn and later the best furniture which had come down from the Wilderness and the fine pieces from Meade Villa,-- the Wailes Washington, Miss., home, were sent over to Oakland Plantation for storage with the Huttons. Sometime later it was discovered that the Hutton children,--Aunt "avinia's grandchildren, who had become of age, were selling off these pieces from time to time. This was after the war when times were difficult and Hutton and his wife had taken to using narcotics and needed money and more money to continue their purchases of their drugs. Eventually, of course the Oakland plantation house was consumed by fire, too, so if any pieces of B. L. C. Wailes or Levin Wailes, his son, were still at Oakland by that late date, having escaped the narcotic ring, they were consumed by fire,-- so all the souvenirs of the Wilderness went up in smoke.

From the "ilderness we drove swiftly down the Fine Ridge road, as night was closing in. We dropped Aunt Cammie and Mrs. Brandon at the latter's home, and Fugabou drove me around to the hotel, so that I might get a stiff drink of whiskey to counteract the excessive ache in my cranium. Before seven o'clock I had hit my downy couch, and fell asleep immediately, leaving word with a friend that should Mr. Chisolm come in during the evening I should be delighted to talk with him.

About eleven I awoke as the lights in my room were switched on. I had been sleeping soundly, and it took me a second to remember where I was and to figure out the identity of Mr. Chisolm.

I asked him to sit down along side my bed, and together we attacked a cigarette. As archiologist for Jeff. Davis Dixon and his White Apple Village project, I wanted to know a lot of things. Mrs. Chisolm told me some of them. This I found most astonishing: This White Apple Village project which Dixon is ballyhooing, with a view of rounding up a few sheckles, is in reality, not White Apple Village at all. The real site of White Apple Village is on St. Catherine's Creek, on Fatherland Plantation, not more than a mile or two from the present city line of Natchez, while Dixon's phony White Apple is on the Masique place,--the old Raily plantation, some 10 or more miles from town. What's more, the excavations prove conclusively that this Dixon development covers a site which the Indian's built and departed from some three hundred years before the real White Apple Village of Mississippi hist rical fame ever came into existence.

To experts in Indsian affairs,--of which I know nothing, I understand the real white apple village is of the eam known

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era known as The Jonesville or possibly the Marxville era, while Dixon's phony White Apple Village is of the Cole's Creek era which ante-dated the real White Apple Village by 300 years.

My thoughts ran back to the recent advertisements in the Natchez newspapers,--big half page ones, put in by Dixon, and imposing in thair details as to the authenticity of his developement, and pontifical with such names, as consultants, as Dr. McCain, of the Historical Society of Mississippi, etc., etc. It looks to me like Dr. McCain has been taken for a big ride, and that Dixon has duplicated his trick when he leased a big hole in the ground, put a fence around it and charged a quarter for the curious to peak over the enclosure,-- after advertising the place thus shown at a premium as the Devil's Punch Bowl, while in reality, everyone knows that this particularl formation wasn't the famous old Natchez place of rendezvous of Pirates and brigands at all.

I'm confident that Dixon's intellectual honesty will not be ruffled in the slightest when I express regret over this hoax, but I reckon he wont love me much for bringing up the matter.

But our cigarettes were burned out, and it was time for Mr. Chisolm had to go, and so we said goodnight, and I went back to sleep, ruminating on the curious fact that "Natchez wont do nuthin", and charlatans in Natchez wont do nuthin' right.



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I awoke about six o'clock and was delighted to discover that I didn't feel quite so ancient as I had when I fell into bed last night.

After a leisurely shower and shave, I had breakfast in the Coffee Shop and found Fugabou waiting for me in front of the Hotel.

We drove down Comochitta street and turning to the left in front of Dunleith, descended to the little valley, and then left again and across the cattle pass into the lovely, forlorn garden of Winchester house which I like so much. From thence we drove around to Aubuen, old Dr. Duncan's home, which, since it is now a public building, would give opportunity to Fugabou a chance to peak in its windows a little, since it was still too early for opening.

We then drove over to Longwood, where I found Captain Willie Harper still in bed. I should have been shot for rousing any one at such an hour,--I reckon it wasn't much after eight, but I figured as that almost anything might happen at Longwood, and so I would contribute this necessity for early rising as my offering for the day.

In Captain Willie's bedroom we stood before the fire and chatted for half an hour, primarily about the pictures of the Sloan plans of the house, although there was a digression or two regarding personal history on the Captain's part which I did my best to head away from as quickly as possible,--not that it might have been interesting, but rather because I wanted to stick to Longwood, the plans and the Butts during the limited time I had.

Frankly I liked the photographs of the plans we had taken of Sloan's original, and I kept the negatives as well as the prints, feeling that these might come in handy some day.

Back to town, we drove directly to Mrs. Brandon's where I found Aunt Cammie and her hostess looking none the worse for their busy day of yesterday, but on the contrary rather refreshed from all the running around we had been doing.

Aunt Cammie wanted to see White Apple Village,--the pseudo one,--and so we mapped out a little tour that would be triangular in design, and cover not only the Village but several other places which I wanted Aunt Cammie to see.

From Hatcher, we headed South, on the edge of town cutting through the center of Fatherland plantation, on the banks of which had stood the real White Apple Village, and continuing our course we struck off from the paved Woodville highway to the old dirt road to Kingston. It was a beautiful morning, with a faint

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faint sun filtering through a thin gauze of filmy gray clouds. The traces were marvelous as always.

We chatted about the various plantations along the route, Cherry Grove, Greenfield, etc., etc., but stopped only at Mantua, the old Chase place.

Mrs. Brandon took two or three photographs of the house. The poverty stricken woman who occupies the old house came out and chatted with us. She said they were pulling down the old mansion within the next six or eight weeks, and she was glad because she found it hard enough to live in such a place and bring up her nine children, whose ages, as I remembered from former contacts, were minus 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9.

Children, like poverty in this family, seems to be cumulative and of course natural.

The woman said she didn't mind if we looked around the place, but that she couldn't invite us in, as her work wasn't done. That sounded good to me, for that frequently is a prelude to doors flying before one in every direction.

I was determined that Aunt Cammie and Mrs. Brandon should see the second floor of old Mantua, for I knew they would both want to see the cabinets of the former Museum which old Mr. Chase had created with us excellent good taste in ante-bellum days. I felt that all three of us would enjoy visiting this spot particularly, too, because B. L. Wailles had often dropped by to exchange pleasant hours with Mr. Chase in his Museum.

And so without considering entrance to the living quarters of the present occupants on the first floor, I piloted Aunt Cammie up the stair case from the back gallery to the upper floor while Mrs. Brandon was taking more pictures and the present Mantua occupant was doing something else around the place. I think Aunt Cammie was delighted to explore the Museum and the unusual architectural features of this unusual second floor.

On our return down stairs, I found Mrs. Brandon on the back gallery, too, and together we made the ascent. She was equally delighted to witness the scene of former intellectual and social elegance of this noble old pile, now so hopeless tottering on the brink of oblivion.

Back downstairs again, we discovered that Aunt Cammie was inside the house on the first floor with the woman who lived there. Mrs. Brandon and I stepped in, too, and thus we were able to get a glimpse of the exquisitely simple medallion on the ceiling of the main living room, note the grand old mantle pieces, etc., etc. Fifteen minutes later we said goodbye to the woman, and quitted Mantua, a house which none of us will probably ever see again.



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From M ntua, we continued along the Kingston Road as far as the road leading to Hutchins Landing, and on this road leading East we passed by noble old Mount Carmel Church where the Rev. Chase had once been so prominent, and then on by Woodstock, the former domain of the Gillespies in ante-bellum days, but now occupied by Judge and Mrs. Armstrong. A little further along this road, we turned in a plantation road which lead to Egypt.

It's a narrow, half forgotten plantation road, winding slowly upward through dense thickets, which leads to the ruins of Egypt.

The Walter Burlings built the place in the 1st half of the 19th century, and even though but the great brick columns remain, it is obviously a relic of what was one of the most fabulous mansions in this fabulous region. Waler Burling had been Wilkinson's emissary to the Spanish Viceroy in Mexico City, when Wilkinson, Burr and Blennerhasset were conniving at establishing some sort of an Empire in that vast territory stretching between Natchez and New Orleans through to Mexico City. Burling, it is said found himself much the richer for his pains in this intrigue. I presume his Adams County property, too much have been a source of great revenue.

And the land which Egypt plantation embraced had long been famous for its year to year productiveness, and especially famous for its corn. Various stories have been told as to how Egypt got its name, although the one which seems to have appeal most to students credence is this:--

One year all the corn crop in the Natchez region failed,--everyones crop except that in this limited area. Farmer and planters, and some say Indian's, too, accordingly made their way to this Second Creek neighborhood to purchase from its abundant storehouse to save themselves, if not from starvation, at least from shortage for shortage of foodstuffs for their cattle and their household. Some one remarked that it was like the Children of Israel going down to Egypt, as people in the region, even in earlier times had occasionally found it imperative to journey to this region to make similar purchases from the Indians who cultivated these acres as their prize corn lands. And so it was that "going to Egypt" gave the Burling place its name, and here in the section of Egypt, far from the Hutchins Landing Road, the great plantation home was built. The great pillars which remain standing, in the midst of the great live oak grove demark dimensions which seem a little more than princely and almost royal, both as to expanse and to height, and the great terraces which stepped down from tier to tier away from the summit on which Egypt rose, is like a progression in ruins of the Gardens of Babylon gone to seed. The marble mosaics in the Chacery Court in Natchez were taken from Egypt. I don't know much more about the details of the house, but I reckon I shall run across it one day.

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Back to the Hutchins Landing Road from Egypt, we continued Westward, passing through the old Gillespie kingdom and through sections of the famous British Grant to Eden of 25,000 acres, and the great Harcourt grant of five or ten thousand acres, and so along by the roads leading to such plantations as Smithfield, Slygo, etc., etc., and out on to the main highway to Woodville at Ferriday Byrens' store at Beverly. Crossing the road, we continued toward the River, lying off beyond the range of hills, and shortly came to the great American Appian Way,--the lower Woodville Road. Passing Laquel Hill, of Dr. Mercer's fame, now owned by Pierce Butler, we came along,--moving northward, to the old Railey Place, so famous for its gardens in ante-bellum days, as described by Ingraham in 1835 as the most remarkable ones in the entire South. I believe I have described the house elsewhere in this Journal,--its imposing length with the gallery running across the entire front, with 5 doors and 10 windows opening out on it.

Clara Masique, the mulatress who owns the place, was not at home, but her sister-in-law, Max met us as we drove in, and asked us to look around as we pleased. We examined the out-buildings casually, and photographed some of them. We then moved around to the front of the house to photograph it, and to gaze at the remarkable view from its front gallery, looking off across White Apple Village, so called, which Jeff. Davis Dixon is sponsoring. While we thus were taking in the imposing landscape, a car drove up, and the mulatress spoke with the man. Someone came up to say that the new arrival was none other than Jeff Dixon himself. We didn't hurry to make his acquaintance, and fortunately he drove off again before we returned to our car. Energy and money are Dixon's long suit. Someone once remarked that if he should tie these powers up with someone with foresight or imagination, he could do a lot for Natchez. The inference was that if I would establish contact with him, he might find some of my ideas useful to his purpose. I must confess I could gladly spend some of his money for him in restoring a couple of tottering buildings which without money will soon have disappeared, but I certainly don't want to add anything to Dixon's propensities of turning everything he touches into a three ring circus, and I guess it is better to let a couple of places slip and save a little of the original spirit of the region rather than to save all the buildings and lose all the soul of Natchez. I was glad when he hurried away.

We chatted for a few moments with Clara's sister in law. She said Mr. Dixon was such a nice man,--he had just run up to tell her she might bring her class to see White Apple Village free of charge one morning next week. (I don't know if she realizes it, but Dixon, they say, wants to get hold of the Railey Place,--and apparently he knows how to begin his assault) The old woman said she taught higher education in one of the local colored schools,--the 8th and 9th grade. I understood her to say. She said her oldest pupil was in her nineties. That does make it adult education, anyway.



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And so we said good by to the Railey place, and headed toward Natchez, passing by Sir William Dunbar's old destroyed mansion, the Forest, where we stopped but for a moment, and so on in to town, where we dropped Mrs. Brandon in town, and thence we drove around to her house ~~XXXX~~ where we dropped a box of good things for her which Aunt Cammie had brought from Melrose as a parting surprise.

Aunt Cammie thought it would be nice to return home by way of Saint Francisville, and so we headed South again, crossing the Homochita Swamp, and lunching in Woodville. Continuing south, we entered Louisiana, but just before reaching Bains, where Miss Louise lives, we discovered that the road was being repaired, or rather a bridge was being altered, thus holding up traffic for ever so long a line, and so we turned about, and retraced our steps of about 75 miles back to Natchez, and thence across the Mississippi, and so headed for home.

We were back at Melrose by six o'clock, and after a light supper, and a quick run through the mail, we said goodnight, and a little after eight I was in bed, with Grandpa parked on my feet, for Frank had left Grandpa in Lyle's house to await my coming.

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Saturday, Nov. 9th, 1940 .

I was glad to wake up at Melrose when Frank arrived with coffee a little after six.

I realized I had a busy day before me at my typewriter, and I accordingly got out a dozen letters before breakfast arrived at 7:30, and by the time the mail had reached the store, I had rather satisfactorily rounded up much of my personal letters which had had such slow going since my late October trip to Natchez.

Aunt Cammie came over for coffee, and together we compared notes on yesterday's trip and on material which was awaiting our attention. We worked together until noon, and then after dinner we resumed our labors until nearly five.

There were frequent interruptions in the afternoon, however, which slowed down work. Henry seems on the verge of another spree, drinking too much during the day and too prone to "ramble" at night, if one is to judge from his appearance.

Then, too, Sam Brown is in the "on again off again" class at the moment. His mother-in-law, Regier Peace's wife, is about to have a baby. As the Peace family live far back on the bayou on the other side of Cane River, it has seemed better for her to come "up-front", as the Cane River banks are called by the darkies. She is accordingly staying with Sam and his wife, and is filling that little cabin with certain mis-givings, particularly in view of the admonitions of Dr. Smith who told her when her last child,-- her 13th, was born that the birth of another child would kill her. And now she is awaiting this doeful event at Sam's house.

Mary the cook is also fussing about something or other. Her husband, the Reverend Sauerwell, is trying to get on relief without success and Mary is resentful that her family can't get a rake off the way so many other families do. Perhaps with the changin of the moon, things may go more harmoniously. I for one am all in favor of anything, even an explosion, if it will reduce the seething under-current which prevails in the ranks of the servants at the moment.

After supper Aunt Cammie and I read for a little while, although malaria seems to have caught up with both of us and we accordingly folded up our beads a little after seven. I was in bed and asleep before eight o'clock.



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Sunday, Nov. 10th, 1940.

Cruious how fast the weeks slip along. Possibly because we have so many things to claim our attention.

Aunt Cammie worked with me during the morning until about 10:30, when the family arrived for their usual Sunday visit, and I switched to correspondence from the work Aunt Cammie and I had been doing.

I saw Sam ab ut noon. He told me that his mother-in-law had given birth to a baby boy about eight o'clock that morning, and while the baby seemed alright, the mother didn't seem to be "doin' so good".

or some r ason which I failed to understand, the usual Sunday gathering didn't develope into the usual full force,--possible because the individual units were entertainin guests in heir own homes.

In the afternoon Aunt Cammie and I worked together until about coffee time, when an Army officer suddenly appeared at the door of Lyle's house where we were working. He asked for Mr. Henry, but Aunt Cammie told him Mr. Henry wasn't at home. Then he asked for Mrs. Henry, and Aunt Cammie explained her identity. The officer said he had visited the plantation a year or so ago,--or possibly it was during last Spring's manoeuvres in this region. In any event, he was now stationed in Alexandria, and had brought up a General and a ajor or something of the sort with him, and could he show them Lyle's house. At this moment, guests arrived at the big house for Aunt Cammie, and so I undertook to show the Army the premises. Not only were these officers accompanied by their wives, but also by their several off-spring. I thought it was a big nerve to come barging in on a Sunday afternoon in this manner, but I did the best I could in courtoousness, although it was like singing psalms to a dead mule, for in reality none of the visitors were interested in the place, save as an excuse for taking up slack of a boring afternoon when they had nothing else to do. I urged them not to spread the good news in Alexandria that Melrose was open on Sunday to visitors, for it reality, it wasn't. I hope they got the general idea.

After they had gone, and supper was in the offing, I learned that Sam's mother-in-law had died during the afternoon. Fortunately someone had run down a hog in the road near Sam's that afternoon, so that Sam had found hogs dropping from heaven-as it were to supply food for the night's wake. The baby seems to be thriving, however, and will porbably make a go of it, if it can survive a wake tonight.

We all retired between seven and eight.

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Monday, Nov. 11th, 1940.

I slept well, but awoke with a slight cold and a severe headache. I reckon it's the malaria which has at last caught up with me.

I had thought of taking a walk this morning, but gave up the idea when I found the roads so muddy that walking was out of the question. While passing the Melrose gardens along Cane River, I saw Sam passing by in a wagon. He was headed toward Cloutiersville, he said, with his father-in-law, intent on getting a coffin. He said they could get a good one for twenty-five dollars and that they had been able to scrape up that much from the pecane's they had picked this year. The funeral would be held this afternoon at St. Matheews. He said last night's rain had spoiled much of a wake,--and probably saved the baby, too, I imagined.

At ten o'clock Aunt Cammie and I ran through the mail. It was good, with several new books from New York and a whole flock of letters, including one from Mrs. Brandon containing several photographs of old buildings in the Atchez region which had long since disappeared and of which there was probably no photographic record save this collection which she had assembled during recent years before the buildings had disappeared. We are having these photographed,--the old Spanish building which once occupied the present site of the municipal building near the Court House, where once the center of the Atchez District had been located.

In the afternoon we worked on dictation from old Atchez records, although with little enthusiasm, since we were both below par physically. We retired shortly after supper.

This was a curious sort of Armistice Day, for in this locality there was no mention of it while on the radio, save for services broadcast from Washington, there seemed to be little by way of commorative services. According to foreign broadcasts, London could not celebrate, in view of the extraordinary conditions obtaining in the neighborhood of the Cenotaph in bomb-riddled London, while in France a decree had been issued, either by the Nazi's or the Vichy Government,--which is after all about the same thing, I guess, forbidding such observations, and as I understand it, a Nazi flag is now draped over the tomb of the Unknown French soldier in Paris.



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Tuesday, Nov. 12th, 1940. page 1.

It turned cold last night, and although the weather is fair today, I gave up the idea of a walk until it is a little warmer and I feel a little more full of vigor.

Sam dropped by this morning on a pretext of cutting or trimming the hedges, but in reality he merely wanted to talk. He told me that he had decided that God had given the little baby to him, and since he had no children and it was his brother-in-law anyway, he had decided to keep it. He said the child's father didn't want it anyway because he had more children now than he knew what to do with.

When I asked him what he was going to name the child, he said the mid-wife had said it should be called K. D., or A. D., he couldn't remember which, but that he was going to find out and bring the family Bible for Aunt Cammie to write the baby's name in it.

I told him that I hoped if the name suggested, - A. K., turned out to be the correct one, I thought it would be nice to keep one initial,--the first one and give the second name one made up of several letters instead of just one. Since the child's last name is Peace, I thought it would be nice to christen it

#### A. Divine Peace

which would be pretty and unusual at the same time, and of course one would also think of that old scamp, Father Divine, and his slogan,--Peace, It's Wonderful.

Later in the day, Sam appeared with his Bible, after having consulted the mid-wife, who had told him that the child should be named K. D. and so that settles that point.

It always has struck me as a little curious the way the darkies like to give their children initials in place of names, such as A. J., and of course that ever popular one,--J. Q.,--which always seems to border on the sac-religious to me.

In the afternoon, I went over to see Zeline, and instead of finding her in bed, as I foresaw the possibility, I found her up and doing, but Joe was tucked up in bed with a chill. Zeline shooed the chickens out of the place and we chatted for half an hour. Just as I was leaving, Edward and several of Wood's children came bouncing in from the woods where they had been gathering pecan

Later I saw Edward who told me that he was hoping to leave for Alexandria for a job on Government barracks on the following Monday.

I was asleep before eleven, with a blazing fire in my fireplace for the weather had grown w ntry, thanks to a blast from the far-away Rockies.

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Wednesday, Nov. 13th, 1940.

page 1

If Aunt Cammie's mother hadn't died five years ago, she would today be celebrating her 100th birthday.

It was chilly this morning, and there was a frost last night which I am afraid will flatten the banana trees before another day has run its course.

There were so many people about since my last return from Natchez,--the time before last,--that I had forgotten to tell Aunt Cammie a lot of things which I had heard there, for some of them were episodes which I didn't want to take up in the presence of others.

Here is one thing which came to me direct, and which illustrates the most peculiar re-action of a negro to unsocial behavior that I have ever known.

It had to do with the distinguished family of Chamberlain, which has long lived on the beautiful, lonely, Pine-Ridge Church Hill Road in Mississippi.

Some people in the region spoke of old Miss Chamberlain who lived in the old Chamberlain mansion alone. She had lived there for years, and only during the day did servants come in to assist with the housework. A few years ago, on a summer's evening, old Miss Chamberlain sat on her front gallery in the quiet of this remote locality. A couple of colored boys,--possibly 18 or 20 years old who lived in the neighborhood, came along the road, and sat down in front of old Miss Chamberlain's gate. They had a bottle with them, and from it they drank, good naturedly laughing and talking in the light of the faint new moon. A little later in the evening, old Miss Chamberlain was raped and news flew the country side like wild fire. Poses were formed immediately and all night long men combed the woods and deep ravines which characterize this out of the way district. Neither of the two colored boys could be found. In the mean time, old Miss Chamberlain had been rushed to the City Hospital, and as dawn broke over the Pine Ridge country, the man-hunters had nothing to show for their night's search. As one posse gathered on the steps of the old mansion, they members were surprised to see the two colored youths for whom they had been searching climb down from one of the big cedars in front of the house.

Both boys were sober, and one of them unbelievably self-possessed.

To the men who immediately surrounded them, he explained that the other youth, although present at the time, had had nothing to do with the raping of old Miss Chamberlain. He further explained that he alone had been guilty. With amazing non-chalance, he



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the colored youth confessed that for a long, long time, he had felt a curiosity as to how it would feel to rape a white woman, that he had obtained a bottle of liquor with his friend last evening, and sat down in front of old Miss Chamberlain's gate and drunk it, and afterwards he had gone up and raped the old lady. Having satisfied his curiosity, and realizing the crime he had committed, he was ready to be hanged, but he begged them to let his friend go, as the other boy had had nothing to do with the matter.

For a member of a race, so noted for its emotionalism, the possessor was floored by the cool reasoning of the youth. He was taken to town, placed in jail, put through the formality of a trial, and a little later was hanged.

The other youth was freed.

In the mean time, the countryside was all in a dither about old Miss Chamberlain,--I reckon she was in her sixties or 70's at the time. The ladies of the community, as soon as decency would permit on the following day, went in a body to the hospital to inquire regarding her condition. The report at the hospital stated that old Miss Chamberlain showed no signs of being "the worse for wear". Timidly, the ladies asked if they might see her, and to their surprise and delight were told they might. They tiptoed to her room lightly, expecting to find her in something of a hysterical condition if not actually in a coma. To their astonishment, they found the old lady all dressed, not in bed at all, but sitting in a comfortable rocking chair, and with a Heavenly smile on her face, rocking like mad, and declaring that she never felt better in her life.

In fact, the old lady had but one thing to complain about, and that was that she should be where she was at the moment. She wanted to go home. And home she went, too, and alone, despite the words of council which the ladies handed out with so much unappreciated solicitude. There was mild consternation when it was learned that the old lady didn't intend to change her mode of living, and would continue to occupy the big house at night all alone. But thus it was that the old lady wanted it and that's the way she had it. And for all I know she may still be sitting there on her front gallery, rocking madly in the moonlight. Of course if would be unlikely that old Miss Chamberlain could actually be hoping against hope that History might repeat itself, but from all accounts her original experience, even though it came almost too late in life, must have been thrilling and in a way satisfying. Certainly from the lips of the youth, it must have been such that he was content to die afterwards, and as for old Miss Chamberlain, she gave every hint in her actions that a second round, even at so high a price to the aggressor, wouldn't be run away from.

I suppose the unexpected re-action of both the colored boy and the antique Southern belle are the two elements which make this story so exceptional. In fact I doubt if it ever could happen elsewhere than in Natchez. And so to bed.

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Thursday,  
Nov. 14th, 1940 - page 1.

The cold snap continues and it was good to find Grandpa on my feet this morning when I awoke.

The frost was heavy and in the bird bath, I found little ridges of ice. The banana trees toppled from their height of 20 to 30 feet when yesterday's sun came out clear. I gave up all thought of getting in the big road until it warmed up.

During the morning, Sam came by to tell me about his baby. He is feeding it on condensed milk and Aaro Corn syrup. He says it's growing.

I asked him about other prospective babies on the plantation,-- Mrs. Elam Brown's child by Mat Burden and Elmer's baby by the same papa.

Sam says that Elam's widow "done got to shift for herself". Mat, it seems to me too busy scrapping around to support Elmer's family without bothering about Elam's orphans. The Widow of Elam has been in bed for several days, Sam says, but her children are taking care of her,--I suppose the eldest may be 10. Sam says it looks like she ought to have had her baby, but she aint yit.

As for Elmer's child, Sam says that's like to be born any old time. He reached this conclusion from observations, I gathered and from something he had seen in the store the other night:

"I seen Mat buy a bottle of Vastor Oil and a vottle of Vaseline, so I guess Elmer, she's gwine to git down to business any day now."

It certainly doesn't sound like race suicide at Melrose these days.

The mail brought good news from Shreveport. Bobina said she might get down this week-end. Aunt Ammie was as happy as I to hear this good news, and after supper tonight, Aunt Ammie telephoned and confirmed the good news of the letter.

Aunt Ammie and I worked all day in short relays, but retired early as both of us are still a little under the weather.



792

Robina told of an episode which had recently happened to some Shreveport people which I thought extraordinary. The wife of a prominent citizen had set her heart on making a trip somewhere some miles distant from home with her husband. The latter didn't seem very anxious to make the journey, and complained that he felt miserable anyway, for he declared that he was coming down with a cold. The wife was sympathetic but adamant about the trip.



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Saturday, Nov. 15th or 16th, 1940 - page 2.

And finally the wife won her husband over to her idea about the jaunt. They accordingly took a sleeper,--where ever they were going was an over night trip on the train, and after her husband had retired, his wife told him that she had prepared materials for a mustard plaster to put on his back to help his cold, and that he should relax and sleep if he could while she went to the dressing room and prepared the plaster for him.

Shortly afterward she returned from the dressing room, found her husband already asleep, his face toward the window, and so she applied it without awakening him. To her surprise and consternation a few seconds later she heard her husband's voice in the next compartment, asking the porter to look for his wife as she had left for the dressing room some time ago, and as he had expected her back immediately, he feared she might have fainted or something might have gone wrong. The porter departed, and the frightened wife slipped out of the compartment where she had just applied the mustard plaster, and slipped into her husband's next to it.

The next morning, as the porter was making up the car, quite a rumpus was started by a man with tremendous blisters on his back. Pointing to so youthful college people riding in the same car, he accused them of playing a prank on him. He looked innocent and perplexed by his strange accusation, but he threatened all sorts of things against them. The wife of the man with a cold was shaking in her boots, but never did admit herself to be the culprit. I believe the conductor of the train eventually soothed the man down, and I don't know any more of the tale, but I guess everyone was glad when it was time to get off.

We chatted until after eight o'clock in Aunt Mammie's room, after which I retired. I had a good program until after ten, where upon I retired as slept well.

794

Sunday, Nov. 17th, 1940.

Beautiful, clear, warm morning, precisely like Spring.

Frank arrived a little later than usual, possibly by 6:45, saying that the "adam and Miss Hobina had made him laugh so much when he had brought them their coffee that he was as tired as though he had done a day's work. Even though just awakening from a deep sleep, Hobina can think of a thousand little silly things to make Frank laugh, and her visits to Melrose are always like a tonic for him.

Immediately after breakfast, I knocked off a stake of mail, including a letter in the rough to John D. Rockefeller, pointing out the surprising similarities between the old Virginia capitol of Colonial Williamsburg and the Territorial capitol of Mississippi at Washington, and asking for the names of such officers in the Williamsburg Development as would care to offer advice on an effort to save such houses in Washington, Miss., as those of Mr. Affleck, Dr. Conette and D. L. C. Wailes.

Hobina came over between eight and nine o'clock and helped me with some of the mail, after which we spent a good couple of hours getting caught up on conversation. Aunt Mammie dropped by but for a few moments for coffee and then was off again on her myriad duties.

We were but three at dinner, and afterward we drove over to call on Zeline whom we found up and about but rather feverish. Joe was up and about and St. Agne was there too, as was Edward who in pursuance of a conversation I had had with him some hours before, said he was leaving for Alexandria that night to seek work on the Army Training Camps there.

From Zeline's we drove 50 miles North from Melrose, through Kashchi Forest, and stopped in to call on Carolyn Vernon and her sister, Virginia. They weren't at home, according to a little colored boy who was playing about the place, but would be back shortly. We went in the house,--astonishingly rustic, and left a note for them, and then headed back toward home. We turned off at Red River to visit the heights of Grand Ecore and to remark upon the beauty of the emplacement of the old Russel-Sibley house which had formerly stood on the cliffs about 1800. We also could enjoy a marvelous view,--I guess about 25 miles down Red River from this vantage point. We also visited the old earthworks and the location of the old powder magazine in this beautifully wooded section, and around to the old Russel cemetery.

We were back at Melrose before sun down and for a couple of hours after supper we chatted in Aunt Mammie room before saying goodnight.



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Monday, Nov. 18th, 1940 - page 1.

Frank arrived a little after six, and said Miss Hobina would be ready to start for Shreveport by 7 if I cared to go part way with her. I said I would ride part way.

Before six thirty, Frank was back again, and said breakfast was already, and that he had served it for three in Aunt Cammie's room. I accordingly joined the ladies there for grapefruit, country sausage, toast and coffee before the decorative fire in the Franklin stove.

It was a gay breakfast, although slightly flurried, as Aunt Cammie was too busy giving Frank suggestions as to what should be put in Hobina's car,--all sorts of boxes and things for her and for other friends in Shreveport,--fig preserves, pecanes, and heaven knows what all.

By seven, Hobina and I were in the big road, and we moved along as briskly as possible in view of the heavy fog which held low over the roadway, especially in the miles that twine along the river.

A little before Grand Core, we said good bye, and I walked back toward town while she continued her course toward Shreveport.

I rode with a friend from town as far as Montrose, and then walked up the Montrose lane for two or three miles. I never met so many people on foot as I did this morning, all going toward Montrose. Some of them I knew, some knew me. Half way along Terrance came into view, carrying a little satchel with him. We chatted for a few moments. He said he was headed for Alexandria in hopes of finding employment on the Camp site, now that the cotton and pecane harvesting is finished and work is slack on the plantation.

Back home, I found Celeste and Mrs. Regard having coffee with Aunt Cammie,--which put a crimp in any hopes we may have had for working jointly this morning.

But in the afternoon we eventually established a contact, beginning work on the unpublished Diary of the Rev. Stratton who from 1843 to 1903 was pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Natchez.

After supper we ran through some original papers from the Natchez Will books, and both of us retired early.

796

Tuesday, Nov. 19th, 1940.

"Happy is the Nation whose annals are brief",--and our annals for the day were limited.

With the usual amount of mail going out before nine o'clock, and a goodly batch coming in before ten o'clock, Aunt Cammie and I ran through a lot of things this morning, and had done a good half day's work when the dinner bell rang.

In the afternoon we repeated our stint, and little if anything happened to disturb our labors.

In and about the place there is the usual unsettled tremor which runs through the plantation at this season of the year when the pecane and cotton money has disappeared and uncertainty hovers over the cabins as regards the next few months before planting time rolls around again.

Henry is still on a bender. He comes to work in the morning, but is scarcely in a condition to accomplish much. It would appear that he has tried Aunt Cammie's infinite patience to the breaking point, but she maintains her even tenor without outward show. But when Henry covertly threatens to take a vacation for a season, to his surprise, Aunt Cammie applauds the idea, and this seems to put Henry back a peg or two. Only time will tell if he can pull himself back to some sort of an average existence, or if the wine, women and song department will get so fastened on him that he will have to take a six months vacation.



797

Wednesday, Nov. 20th, 1940.

The fine weather continues.

After the mail was finished, I took a little turn in the gardens, and gathered a fine bouquet of narcissus for my desk to balance the chrysanthemums Aunt Cammie had brought me yesterday. I wish I had had the narcissus here last night when my neighbors, the family of skunks who are liming under Lyle's house, got out of hand,--no doubt disturbed by some of Grandpa's meanderings, and sounded a protest by the penetrating manner by which nothing can surpass a skunk.

Sam Brown came by with the coffee tray a little before ten. He had much to say about the baby. Last night he said the baby developed what he termed "the hives",--which in common parlance, I gathered was the hives. He was greatly worried because the baby didn't wake up at the regular time to feed, and so he shook it good, he said, and it woke up alright. I expounded a theory on Shakespeare's line about the "kind nurse of man".

Sam was worried about another point. The baby's finger nails are so long, the little fellow is scratching his face with them, but, as Sam explained, "you can't cut them nails 'cause if you does, the baby will sure take to stealin' when he's growned up". Sam was in a quandary, and wondered if it would be alright, since the nails can't be cut under the circumstances, if his wife might "chew" them off. I told him I thought it would. After all, the superstition would persist anyway, and if the child's face could be saved by this circumvention, I should imagine two good points might be thus covered.

Aunt Cammie came for her tomato juice while I had my coffee. There was a good mail, with many letters, including one from Lyle, saying he had hoped to come up for Thursday's Thanksgiving Day and the week-end, but half of Washington City had fallen into town, and he would have to remain behind in New Orleans. He remarked that of the W.P.A. Administrators, Harry Hopkins was a very sick man, his successor, Col. Harrington had died on the job, and now Howard Hunter, the head of it at present, is in New Orleans, sick. Sam Brown ought to know all about this, for he could certainly start a superstition about W.P.A. alright.

Aunt Cammie and I labored in the afternoon until four o'clock when Joe Peace came by to pay me a little visit. After supper Aunt Cammie and I read from Shield's account of the History of Adams County which was good in spots, but quite spotty. Just before I left the Big House, Dan arrived from Baton Rouge for the week-end. We chatted for a few minutes, and then I retired, going to sleep a little after nine, with Grandpa at my feet.

798

Thursday, Nov. 21st, 1940.

Thanksgiving Day for Louisiana, and for a number of other States, I suppose, too, although not for all, since Texas, for example, is choosing a week hence.

The weather continues mild, and although the sun isn't especially bright, the atmosphere has all the appearance of a Spring day.

Aunt Cammie came over for coffee a little before ten, and together we worked until after eleven.

Celeste and J. H. gave the Thanksgiving Day dinner at their house. I arrived rather late in the limited list of family guests, but in time for a dry Martini before we sat down. There were nine, beginning with Celeste, and Mrs. Rigard, her mother, then followed Eugene, Sister, the husband, J. H., Dan Aunt Cammie and me, in the order named. May and Rita served, and the dinner went along smoothly and everything was a delicious as any epicurean could desire. I majored on turkey and of course ate twice as much of everything as I should have. Instead of mince pie, an angle food cake made the rounds, and afterward I did much too much with the candy and salted pecanes.

By one thirty, I was back home again, and spent the remainder of the afternoon at my typewriter.

I don't remember anything very especially of interest at the table by way of conversation. Celeste did say that some one brought Curtis Dahl to call the other day, and that he had had something to say about his children,--Buzzie and Sistie, grandchildren of F. D. and Eleanor Roosevelt, through their daughter Anna, who was Mrs. Dahl by her first marriage. Celeste like Curtis Dahl but didn't elucidate.

About five o'clock, we went through the motions of supper at the big house, but no one seemed able to do much with any of the food, so I guess the dinner was a pronounced success.

Aunt Cammie and I didn't read long, as we were both rather exhausted after all the coming and going during the day, and I was in bed before eight o'clock.



799

Friday, Nov. 22nd, 1940.

Frank arrived about 6:30. It was too warm for a fire, and we accordingly exchanged a couple of confidences while I had my first cup of coffee.

Without waiting for breakfast, I was up in the big road before seven, under a cloudy sky which hadn't let down any rain but which had so filled the earth with moisture that the dirt was slippery under my feet all the way from elrose to Montrose. There I found a couple of men awaiting the bus,--Frank's distinguished looking father,--a study in soft chocolate clothes and half to match, and some other man I didn't know.

The bus was crowded with people and many had to stand. I believe there were four white people and about 25 or 30 negroes and mulattoes,--all in a gay humor.

I walked part way back from town, but waited by the road for a little time, when Beth Loutier of Bermuda, stopping as she headed toward town, to chat for a moment with me, and saying she would take me to elrose on her way back if I was still there when she returned. I had declined her invitation to accompany her to town.

But she had scarcely disappeared when another car headed toward home, stopped and a woman got out. She was mulatto. Asking me if I were going to elrose, she said she would be glad to have me ride, but that I would have to crawl over her seat, as the one by the other door was broken and one couldn't open the door itself.

It turned out to be Joe de Rocque's wife, the man who had the little garage up on the elrose Bermuda road a mile or so from elrose. The trip back was quick, and on our arrival at the garage, I asked to see the pair of squirrels again. Both Jo and his wife seemed pleased that I remembered their pets.

Just as I left their little home, heading toward elrose another car came along, so that I was picked up again. I didn't know the driver, but Whang ettayer was riding along side.

I was home before eleven, ran through the mail and then did a couple of things around the house before four guests arrived for dinner,--Miss Avinia Egan, Miss Erring, Mrs. Somebody and her son Sydney,--a quartet of hill-billies. Miss Egan is in her 70's, I suppose. She once carried Vote Women banners in Washington City in the days before suffrage (with a E) had been secured for women. She knows a lot about Louisiana history. She still affects the costume of a man, although she does wear a skirt. She labors under the illusion that mild viciousness has an element of virtue about it. As I wrote to Hobina after she had left between four and five o'clock, the others were so much ballast, and in regard to Miss Avinia, I must confess, that

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Friday, Nov. 22nd, 1940 - page 2.

that I am much too old to waste time coaxing people to be ~~more~~ courteous, and so after her first exhibition of bad manners, I gave her a gentle jolt, whereupon she immediately became human, and we had a rather delightful afternoon."

Of her many oil paintings, minatures, original documents letters and diaries relating to them, Miss Avinia is giving these to L. S. U.

I don't know anything about her writing, although it appears that she has done quite a bit about the Texas region and the Shreveport area. From her conversation, I was amused to learn that she is the type who twists history to fit what she would like have her forebearers have done, and while this is vaguely amusing as a parlor game, I'm afraid it would be of little asset in giving a very true picture of the life and times of her Louisiana ancestors on whom she sets such high store.

But all this space is rather more than the lady deserves, and so I shall break off by saying that we were glad when they were gone, and we could read for a little while after supper before going to bed about 7:30.



801

Saturday, 22nd, 1940.

It began raining sometime between four and five, and continued throughout the day. It is still pouring at 10 P. M. as I write these lines.

The grass plots in the gardens still seem to be grass plots but only seem ngly so, as I discovered when I started for the mail this morning, for the tops of the grass concealed an inch or more of water which the ground, already saturated, seemed unable to absorb. We ought to have a nice little collection of formal lakes by morning.

The mail was varied, with a few letters and several books from various points,--an excellent one on Weaving from Canada, a copy of Elizabeth Brandon Stanton's Fata Morgana, a couple of volumes on ante-bellum fiction in Louisiana, etc. The letters included one from Mrs. Ferriday Byrnes of Natchez asking me to have dinner with her today,--an invitation I would gladly have accepted, were I in Natchez, but of course, were I there, I wouldn't know of the invitation, since it of course would be in Melrose.

In the afternoon, Aunt Cammie and I worked on the Stratton Diary together, and reached the conclusion that it could easily be abridged without losing anything of interest for us, as we weren't especially interested in the various textes old Stratton so laboriously listed for his Sunday preaching nor did we care much about his endless religious discussions and his theological ruminations.

Supper at five, with wild duck the principal feature, and afterwards we read from various Spanish records regarding civil suits in the Natchez region under Gayoso in the 1790's, and for the most part about old Adam Cloud, one of the first Protestant preachers in the neighborhood, and the tangle he got mixed up in over hog-stealing and the torturing of one of his youthful slaves, all set down in flamboyant leagal terms with repetitions and administrative flourishes which made the perusal rather slow going.

A little after seven we said good night, and I waded over to Lyles, where, after a hot bath and a little supper and a little work on my typewriter, I wrote today's Journal, and so to bed.

802

Sunday, Nov. 24th, 1940.

It rained all night, and continued throughout the day.

During breakfast, I listened to news broadcasts, several of which spoke of rising rivers to the West of us, with four areas in Texas under water. Everything in this region seems to be under water, but moderately so, and will continue to be thus well-behaved. I suppose unless the Mississippi begins backing up into Red River when we shall have to begin thinking of row-boats to get from one house to another.

Charles and Ida drove up the five miles between Melrose and Little River with Ida returning to New Orleans shortly after arriving here,--and slightly dampened by the submerging to the buggy between here and Little River as they crossed the bayou.

Charles called just as Aunt Cammie had come to work with me, and before he left Frances arrived, and before she had left the Cloutierville family blew in, so all our hopes of doing any thing jointly went glimmering.

After dinner, on returning to Lyle's, I found Bluff working at the grandfather clock. He had the face of it off and most of the wheels and gages from the inside spread of the floor. Poor, big, dumb Bluff,--the strongest and laziest darkie on the place, and somehow by his own grace, special tender of the clocks which he usually winds and repairs on Sunday. Frank says Sunday is as good as any other for Bluff, and possibly a little better, since he thus gets a chance to grab off a little food from the kitchen. In any even, on Sunday, one is bound to hear clocks striking with an abandon and unendingly in the big house, the loom house, the bindery, my house, Mr. Miller's Lyle's and heaven knows where all,--and sometimes they run pretty well after Sunday is done,--much to every one's surprise.

In the afternoon, the usual number of guests were coming and going, but by 6:30 the household was in repose, and we read for a while before the Franklin Stove. I was struck by a line in the Diary of the Presbyterian minister, Stratton, of the Natchez Presbyterian Church who recorded in his Diary that he had visited a girl who was dying in her home Under-the-Hill, and he further remarked that she was "a prostitute, as were all the members of her family",--which was saying quite a lot of the old man and the boys, at least.

I retired to Lyle's house before eight, wrote some, and listened to the radio version of Pride and Prejudice with Helen Hays, - and so to sleep.



803

Monday, Nov. 225th, 1940 -

The rain continues, and so does the warm weather. the vegetable and flower gardens are responding opulently.

Before I had finished with my out-going mail, Sam Brown came putting around with a broom, ~~xx~~ ostensibly to do a little sweeping but in reality merely to talk a little while standing before my blazing hearth.

"He spoke of "elrose people who were concentrating on Alexandria for work these days. He says Numa Rogier's truck goes by his house every morning at five o'clock, taking a group of people from "elrose who are working on the Army Training camps scattered about Alexandria. He says that "athaniel Preux was diving down in his car this morning, and that he was taking "uny with him, for at seven o'clock "athaniel was blowing mightily in front of "uny's house, doing his best to awaken the late sleeper. He said the Gabriel is working in or near Alexandria in a saw-mill. No one expects the jobs to last more than 60 days but the daily wage is about equal to the weekly one at "elrose, so if the darkies can make a go of it for a few weeks, they'll be in the money.

"But according to Sam, the folks working down there find it different from the work they do at "elrose. In Alexandria they have to be at work at a certain hour,--7 o'clock he thinks, but if one is a minute late,--he is too late for that morning's labors. At Alexandria one has to keep on the jump, too, and even though it be cold and rain, one cannot stand around a fire from time to time to get warmed up. The work is so organized, too, that a communication system goes on without more than the sign language,--if a board, for example of a particular width is required,--say a two by four,--two fingers go up automatically by the foreman, and the laborer has to keep a sharp eye on him, and keep a-ummpin'. All this sounds very heady to Sam, and the thought of such concentrated effort, even though it be but for eight hours a day, makes him shrink from the thought of such an expenditure of energies.

Aunt "ammie and I worked both in the morning and afternoon with a break for dinner and for coffee and going through the mail, which included a note from Mr. Peterson of the Department of Interior, advising us that the plans for the African House at "elrose, as issued by the American "istric "uilding's Survey, as well as the photographs, are now ready. We ordered sets by return mail.

In the evening we read curious compositions purporting to be about epitaphs in the "atchez Cemetery, but the "wordage" was extensive but the ephtaphs brief. We r tired before eight.

804

Monday, Nov. 25th, 1940.

It rained all night and kept it up without a stop all day long.

There was the usual delay in the delivery of mail, as always happens after excessive doupours, since the postman must travel the river road which is inevitably a sea of water and mud holes after every sprinkle. After all, the land holders on that road from Bermuda to "elrose are all mulattoes, and since they have no vice in Government, their road is never the concern of County or State officials.

There were letters from Manhattan and "atchez, Shreveport and a few pieces from other places about the country. Among the other notes was a plain postcard from Alexandria, "a. It was from Edward saying that he did not get a job with the camp construction gang but did get a job in a bar-room.

I learned, too, that Puny and "athaniel have gone to Alexandria in hopes of finding work on the construction gang. Gabriel is there too, but is working on a saw mill job rather than on the camp site. It appears that a good section of "elrose labor will be Alexandria if that job lasts.

Aunt Camie and I worked on the Straton Diary, but not without certain misgivings as to its value. "t is true that it does form a listing of Who's who in "atchez in ante-bellum times, but it is pretty dull going, since there is little more than a recitation of the names of people seen and an endless concern of the "astor himmsex shelf as regards in ~~new~~ own salvation. As we were reading it I was struck by the perpetual concern he felt for the first person singular, and now far removed was his concept from that of the Lord's Prayer which stresses the first person plural throughout.

I guess Grandpa must have been rambling last night, for he never did come home to sleep at my feet, and only this afternoon did he appear at the door, a little damp and somewhat dishevelled.

Aunt "amie and I resumed our work about 2 o'clock and continued until supper time, after which we read from various volumes of the Mississippi Historical Journal until eight o'clock when we said good-night.



805

Tuesday, Nov. 26th, 1940.

The rains continue to fall in torrents.

I got out a lot of mail between coffee a little after six and breakfast about eight o'clock.

There seems to be a storm brewing in the kitchen, with the cook stirring up discord between one servant and another, and at the same time voicing her own discontent with her status. I'm beginning to understand what J. E. means when he says that every once in a while all of them have to change houses.

There was a fairly good batch of mail today, including a letter from Nellie Wailes Brandon requesting further advice on her book on Washington, Mississippi. Somehow, I'm beginning to doubt if that volume will ever see print, but while there is life there is hope.

I had a nice letter from the Director of the Williamsburgh properties of Mr. Rockefeller, offering advice on my proposed restoration of Washington, Miss. I certainly wish the Rockefellers would take over that area and put it back on its feet the way they did the old Colonial Capitol of Virginia.

In the afternoon, Aunt Cammie and I worked on documents covering lawsuits in the Natchez area under the Spanish regime, including further papers on the libel or slander suit brought by Adam Cloud regarding assertions made concerning his torturing of his slave and his propensities at pig-stealing,--a fine kettle of fish for the man who introduced Episcopalianism into the South West.

Being a little under the weather with malaria, we both said goodnight rather early, and so to bed. I was enchanted to find Grandpa waiting for me on my doorstep on reaching home.

806

Wednesday, Nov. 27th, 1940.

It was colder this morning and the skies are still gray with a fine sprinkle sifting through the overburdened atmosphere from time to time.

Aunt Cammie came over for ten o'clock coffee and a round of dictation but our good intentions were dashed to nothingness by the arrival of Celeste and her mother who came for coffee and staid so long it was time for dinner when they were gone.

In the afternoon, we worked on old Straton's Diary until four o'clock when I went over to see Celine.

I was delighted to find her looking much better and quite as gay in spirit as ever.

We spoke of Rita's great aunt,--the Vampire,--who had died earlier in the week. Somehow, Tante Jule had been some kin of Joe Rocque, but I was uncertain as to the relationship,--somehow, I gathered through the rudhommes, although I wasn't sure. It was one of those days when Zeline was confusing her French and her English and her genders were so out of joint that I couldn't climb any family tree beyond the first branch.

One thing she said struck me with some astonishment: "That man, he was the sister of that other man who was proud enough, quendmeme il n'avait pas nothin'".

She said she was worried about Edward who had gone to Alexandria with that Chevalier boy, the same one, according to Celine, who had gone to New Orleans to work and had tried to marry a white girl but had been run out of the town for his trouble.

Back home for supper, and afterwards Aunt Cammie and I read from the Pink Papers of the Natchez Democrat until eight when we said goodnight.



Thursday, Nov. 28th, 1940.

807

It is still cludy and chilly but it didn't rain last night and with the mounting breeze, I believe the roads will be dried up within another day or so.

I didn't feel very ambitious this morning, and so I sent out not more than a half dozen letters, and none of them were worth the postage.

Visitors interrupted our labors this morning, although we did take time off to run through the mail, which included some interesting letters from Nellie Wailes Brandon and some copies of letters from Joseph Dunbar of Arunda to David Hunt, written, I suppose about 1835. There were photographs too of the old Dent place near Rodney, taken a number of years back by Nellie Wailes before Mr. Wonda had taken the Dent house down to restore Gayoso which burned last month.

In the afternoon we read from Hatcher documents, and particularly regarding Under The Hill, something about Madame Segovia's disreputable house there and the notorious Kentucky Tavern.

Things in the servant department seem to be seething at an increased momentum. And Henry is still running up and down the road, drunk most of the time, and withal quite dissatisfied with his present domestic and his economic position.

Rumors come up from Alexandria of race difficulties that are becoming manifest in that region. It seems that recruits in the camps surrounding the city are converging on the town at the close of the day and are consorting with girls of color, and have caused some ripples of resentment by trying to take the colored girls to the movies, which doesn't go in this region. I don't know how the race riots will develop, but it certainly seems as though there might be more mulattoes in the offing anyway.

And so to bed.

808

Friday, Nov. 28th, 1940.

It is still rather chilly, but the rains have ceased, and when Frank arrived a little after six, he told me he thought I would be able to walk in the big road without getting bogged down. I accordingly was up and away before 7 o'clock.

I talked with several people in the big road, including a contractor from Alexandria who told me that the labor at the Army Camps was intensive, and that it inclined toward wearing down the plantation negroes within a short time after they began working on any of the construction work.

According to the contractor, there is no talking by the workers while on the job, and everything which is needed by a carpenter is transmitted by sign to the darkies,--such as two fingers being raised to indicate the need of a 2 by 4, etc., etc. He says the outside work seems to be hard on the darkies too.

I was home before ten, and had a hot bath, and did nothing until dinner time, thanks to the ancient feeling I am supporting because of the malaria which still hovers about.

In the afternoon Aunt Mammie and I worked on Jefferson County, Miss., source material, and after supper we read from an account of Dr. J. W. Monette's activities while a resident at Washington, Miss., and his theories on quarantining for Yellow Fever,--the first such theories to be propounded and to be acted upon with notable success.

We folded up about eight.



809

Saturday, Nov. 30th, 1940.

page 1.

It was good to find the weather warmer when I awoke a little after five.

When Frank arrived with coffee at six, he built a fire but it was primarily decorative

Aunt Cammie came over for coffee, with a view of continuing our research together, but before we had written a line, Frank arrived to say that Miss Edith Davenport had just driven in with two of her children, and so Aunt Cammie was off to greet her old friend of years standing.

Miss Edith is a remarkable woman, somewhere in her late forties or early fifties, I imagine. Her family was well fixed financially, as I understand it, and as a young woman, Edith studied art with some success. She painted in France and Belgium where she was decorated by the King, and it is said that the canvasses she copies in the Louvre were executed with unusual skill. I believe her mother was estranged from her father, and was living with Edith in Europe at the time of her death. Edith brought her mother's corpse back to America for burial, and remained in the United States where she subsequently inherited a comfortable bit of property from her father.

Some twelve years ago, Edith adopted a little boy from an Asylum in Florida near the Davenport winter residence. To me more correct, I should say that she agreed to raise the child, although she did not take out adoption papers. Shortly afterward, the Asylum from which this boy was taken advised Edith that the boy had a little brother and sister about a week or two old and that the institution had not the facilities to bring up these tiny babies,--they were a twin boy and girl,--and they asked her if she would undertake their care until they had grown sufficiently in strength to withstand the rigors of ordinary Asylum life. Edith said she would not undertake to raise this set of twins, but that she would keep them for a few weeks or months until they had bridged the delicate era of first babyhood. That was twelve years ago, and of course she has never given them up as yet.

The twins were with Edith and before dinner while Edith was chatting with Aunt Cammie, the twins were with Frank, whom they adore, and he was providing horses for them to ride and letting them accompany him on his several horse about the place.

810

Saturday, Nov. 30th, page 2 - 1940.

Edith and the children had driven down from Texarkana this morning, and were stopping off at Belrose for a few hours and would then resume their trip as far as New Orleans where they will stay this evening, and then drive on to Florida where they will spend the winter. Their other home is in Kansas City whence they came, having started on Friday, I believe.

In confidence, Edith told Aunt Cammie that the 16 year old boy was beginning to arouse certain misgivings in her mind in view of his violent temper which seems to be showing itself more clearly with the transition from boyhood into young manhood. It seems that about the only control she has over him in the final resort, is the fact that she can threaten to return him to his former home in the Florida Asylum if he doesn't toe the mark, and yet this threat doesn't always seem effective, and she says that once in a fit of temper, the boy has struck her. The twins, however, seem more easily managed, and I must say that the little I saw of them at dinner seemed to carry out the idea that they were well behaved children.

Surely it is remarkable for a young woman to have adopted three children and devoted her life to their up-bringing. As a matter of fact, I don't recall ever having heard of a parallel case. I certainly hope these children realize as much in a social and economic way as their foster mother must experience in spiritual satisfaction for having done her bit in giving these youngsters a greater opportunity than an orphan's home would have offered.

Before Miss Edith and the children had departed in the afternoon, other guests blew in and when they were gone, the day was pretty well spent.

After supper, Aunt Cammie and I read Matchez documents and exchanged ideas on contemporary citizen of Matchez until eight when we said goodnight.

I took a hot bath, swallowed some quinine, wrote a little and then went to bed.



811

Sunday, Dec. 1st, 1940.

Gray clouds and mist have come back again. It was almost dark at 6:30 this morning when Frank arrived.

But inclement weather has lots of advantages, not the last of which is the fact that it discourages road-running and in consequence, not visitors are likely to clutter up Melrose today.

In the morning Aunt Cammie came over before coffee time, and we ripped through old Dr. Straton's Diary, and after dinner, which we had alone, we continued our labors until after four.

With just the two of us on the place, Aunt Cammie had given Rita the day off. Mary had sent word on Friday night after leaving, that she would be sick on Saturday and Sunday, but would be well again on Monday, and so Celestine had come to cook in the morning, but, as is the custom at Melrose, had had the rest of Sunday off. In the afternoon, Frank had served coffee, but apparently had denied himself this brew for something a little more heady, but not appreciably so.

In consequence, Aunt Cammie observed that she and I could easily find whatever we needed in the ice box, and so we had our supper alone, save for a brief visit from J. H. who dashed in to a bit of cold pork and a hurried goodnight just as we were finishing.

We read for a while after supper, but with both of us a little under par, we said good night early, and I retired shortly afterward.

812

Monday, Dec. 2nd, 1940.

Frank brought me my coffee at little after six and made me such a roaring fire that I was up and doing before he poured my second cup.

I plunged into a mass of correspondence which I got out of the way before Sam arrived with my breakfast a little after eight.

Sam had much to tell me about the progress his little K. D. is making and how he has to give him more canned milk mixed with Aero Corn Syrup now that the child is growing so fast.

Sam said Puny and Athaniel had come up from Alexandria on Saturday night about eight o'clock, and that Puny was wearing a big button, indicating that he had landed a job with the force working on the Camp construction. He said that Jake and Ben Gabriel and two or three boys from Cogniac had come up too. It seems they all returned to Alexandria Sunday afternoon about four. How long they will stand the work, Sam didn't know, but he reckoned they wouldn't be able to make a go of it for long.

In spite of guests which tended to confuse our joint labors, Aunt Cammie and I did considerable on the Jefferson County, Miss., Source Material, and after supper we read until we got from Mississippi Historical Journals when we said good night.



813

Tuesday, Dec. 3rd, 1940.

A beautiful Spring day, with a brilliant sun and plenty of jonquills dancing in the March-like breeze that blew blustering and warm from the South.

Frank arrived a little earlier than usual, and was filled with enthusiasm at the prospect of having his house done over with such features as new flowers and new windows and a hundred and one little alterations to make the place more comfortable this Winter. Aunt Cammie has been drumming at J. H. to have it done for several days, and now the job seems to be undertaken.

Henry and Willie Collins seem to be working on the repairs. According to some of the darkies, Henry is wool-gathering these days, but I am never quite certain what the darkies mean by that expression, as it seems to be some special that the new "Anglad" interpretation of the phrase as standing for something like "day-dreaming". I am under the impression that in the Cane River area "wool-gathering" has something akin to harassment or to a sensation approaching torment, although I am not certain. In any event, Henry's wife is flying between their house and the store, where she told J. H. yesterday that she had informed Henry he could move and that she was keeping the house. J. H. set her right on that point, by observing that the house belonged to Melrose and was for Henry as a laborer on the place and not for an "asylum for a disgruntled wife."

The matter seems complicated by the fact that the wife borrowed 25 dollars from her papa,--Uncle Lewis, in order to pay a bill for repairs on Henry's car, and now Henry has removed the car to Montrose, three miles away, and Uncle Lewis is threatening to sue Henry for the \$25.00. That ought to be some lawsuit,--suing a turnip for blood.

Aunt Cammie and I did a little work in the morning, and after dinner, we divided our interests,--Aunt Cammie going up beyond town with Celeste to select rose bushes at some unheard of nursery up there, while I went over to call on Zeline. I found Joe on the front gallery, sunning himself, and Zeline busy over her wash-tub. She finished her job while Joe and I chatted, during which he told me he would be 79 a week from Saturday and that Zeline was 87.

Within a few minutes, Zeline had her sheets and things hanging on the picket fence and was back in the house, making lemonade for Joe and me. She showed me the pieces of cloth Mary had sent her on my return from Edgewood. Mary is piecing a quilt with the pieces, and purposes to give it to Aunt Cammie.

814

Tuesday, Dec. 3rd, 1940 - page 2.

On saying goodby, Zeline told me that she was continuing to burn candles for Miss Robina. I was glad. Joe walked to the gate with me. I could see he was struggling against his sense of good taste and an urge to satisfy some undisclosed longing. He finally broke down and said if he had a dime, he certainly would buy himself a beer. We walked as far as the saloon together.

Back home before three, I continued past Melrose and followed the road along the river to the spot where they are building a new "shot-gun" house for Luff. They took down his old house back in the cotton patch this morning, and are putting up a new one on the "front", as the River road is termed. There were 7 or 8 men concerning themselves with the frame work. Joe Heavillier seemed to be working, the other six or seven men seemed to be playing. Fugabou and Henry Anderson were sawing through a dozen boards with a cut-cross saw. Instead of cutting off three feet from the end of the stack of boards,--perhaps one inch by eight inches, they were cutting off a foot and a half from each end of the pile of new boards. That is certainly one way to use up material. Four men sat and watched while two men sawed, and when they had cut through their pile of boards, two other men piled up a similar stack, and then they took over the sawing while the other four watched. And when that was done, two others did the same exercise while the others rested and watched. Efficiency experts would have died to see such performances, but the negroes weren't passing out, either from lack of humor or over-exercion. I have heard it said often enough that a plantation negro doesn't do much but he gets paid in excess of what he does. If this could be taken as a sample, I would get the general drift of the argument.

I dropped by Sam Brown's to see his foster child, K. D. It was as sweet a little darkie as I ever laid eyes on.

Back home at four, I found Aunt Cammie just returning from her rose bush expedition,--enchanted as usual to be home again after an excursion into the big road.

After supper we intended to read from John Sibley's Journal, but Mrs. Egard came over to spend the night, and we fell to talking about Dr. George Stevens and his unbelievable existence at Melrose, and so the evening slipped by. With a heavy cold in the head, I betook myself to bed early after a hot bath, and with G andpa at my feet, fell asleep early.



815

Wednesday, Dec. 4th, 1940.

It was like Spring when I awoke about six this morning,--  
clear and cool and invigorating.

After a couple of cups of coffee and a quick shower, I was  
in the big road, and marveling, as always, at the unique beauty of  
Cane River as I crossed over the bridge. The surface is always so  
amazingly silver at this hour of the day and the fir trees are so  
astonishingly balck, etched on the silver surface by the reflections  
which are so clear-cut this early in the morning.

I walked a few miles, found myself in town and out of town  
again, and was back home again a little after ten.

The mail had come, and Aunt Cammie and I ran through it during  
coffee. A letter from Edith Wyatt Moore spoke of additional old  
documents which she had which she would like to go over with me.  
I wrote her in response that I would come over next Tuesday. Natchez  
seems like quite a trip at the moment, however,--I reckon because  
I am feeling a little ancient and somewhat uncertain of what the  
week-end may offer by way of wear and tear on the energies.

I worked at my desk all afternoon, Aunt Cammie being kept  
from dictating from Source Material by guests who had come down  
from town shortly after dinner and remained until supper time.

When the house was bereft of all this clutter, however, and  
the evening meal was done, we read for an hour or so from Dr.  
Sibley's Diary covering his Journey from Charleston to New Orleans  
and his impressions of the latter place. One or two things he  
mentioned struck me particularly,--one was his reference to some  
"golden-carp" which a New Orleans lady had in a glass dome open at  
the top,--which I took to be a fish-bowl.

So far as I can recall, this was the first mention I ever  
ran across of gold fish in colonial America. If I remember  
correctly, gold fish were introduced into Europe from China by  
Madame de Pompadour which was probably about 1755 to 1760. As Dr.  
Sibley was writing his Journal in 1802, there is a chance that  
gold fish may have been in America for a number of years, but  
I don't recall any reference to them before.

At 7:30 we said good night, and so back to Lyle's house.  
I had a hot bath, did some mail, and so went to bed between 8 and  
9 o'clock.

816

Thursday, <sup>Dec.</sup> Nov. 5th, 1940.

Another beautiful, Spring like day,--all sunshine and  
warm breezes from the South.

I didn't do so much at my typewriter but covered plenty of  
ground in and about the gardens.

Aunt Cammie came over for a few minutes in the morning  
to run through the mail which included a letter from Mary  
Lambdin, suggesting that we all come over to Natchez after  
the first of the month and join her in taking loads of pictures  
of old places up and down the traces.

Mr. Bachelier, back somewhere from the remotest stretches  
and byoux of Little River came up to prune Aunt Cammie's  
shrubs and things. I enjoyed him at dinner, for he is an intel-  
gent little Frenchman and it's a pleasure to listen to him and  
his attractive accent. It seems he came to these shores more  
than 20 years ago, arriving and living in Canada for a while  
and eventually making his home here in this somewhat remote  
section of Louisiana. He told me that his kins people lived  
in Nantes. Mr. Bachelier spoke to me of his friends in Paris,  
where he seemed to know various people long ago,--I suppose  
he is in his late fifties now, but he mentioned none by name,  
and of course I

Mr. Bachelier obviously keeps abreast of the current  
literature from France,--or did before the war killed such  
importations, and he seems well acquainted with world affairs.

And aside from these intellectual interests, Aunt Cammie  
says that Mr. Bachelier has great estate parcels in various lo-  
calities, including the New Orleans area, not to mention his  
cardinal concern over trees and shrubs and plants, with a vast  
knowledge of the thousand and one aids and ailments that flourish  
in the horticultural world. A strange little man, Mr.  
Bachelier, and a likeable one, too. I was interested in what  
he had to say regarding people of color. It was this: "The  
blacks are much better than the mulattoes, because you can control  
the blacks easier and the mulatto thinks he is a much better  
than a white man than the white man thinks he is better than  
the black".

Anlogie is supposed to be a forte with the French.

In the afternoon, after bidding goodbye to Mr. Bachelier,  
Aunt Cammie had a bunch of pilgrims, some from California, blow  
in and we, as a consequence, got not transcriptions made  
from unpublished Diaries. After supper we read from the Diary  
of Dr. John Sibley,--an account of his voyage up the Mississippi  
from New Orleans to Natchez, enlightening and humorous and  
we like it: At 7:30 we said goodnight.



817

Friday, Dec. 6th, 1940.

The weather continues fine and "spring-like."

Aunt Cammie came over before ten, but we had scarcely run through the mail before Joe, "eline's husband, came by with some chickens as a present from "eline to Aunt Cammie. It didn't take Aunt Cammie long to get a note to the store, ordering cash paymnet for this gift.

Joe sat down for a few moments to talk with us. Aunt Cammie asked him about one of the "ettoyers who left "elrose some years back with his wife, and went to "arysville, La., where he successfuly operated a store of some kind. A little later the man was killed. Aunt Cammie asked Joe if he knew how and why the man was murdered. Joe said he did know,--it was because a white woman pursued the mulato, and white men observed her going to "ettoyer's store after night. The white men shortly afterward put a stop to this liason by calling at the store and ordering "ettoyer to follow them. "ettoyer's wife went along too, but the men sent her back to the store, and then killed her husband. Nothing was ever done about the white woman who had been the nocturnal visitor. Thus white surperiority counts for something, but just what I wouldn't be able to say.

Joe spoke of the people in the "elrose region who are going to Alexandria these days to work on the Government camps. He said he hoped that the boys he and Zeline had brought up during the past 50 years,--they never had any of their own,--would get along all right. He said among other things, he had always taught such children "tosee with their hands and touch with their eyes", and so far as he knew, none of these boys had ever been accused of taking anything which wasn't there own.

We got back to work after dinner and accomplished considerable before supper time, after which we read a very hilarious article by "ou e Butler in the "ouisiana Historical Journal on the typical "outhern ante-bellum planter.

J. H. came in about 6:30 to bid his mother goodnight. He spoke of the tangle Henry "ertzog is in at the moment. His wife is dissatisfied with the way Henry is squandering his money on some dusky belle in "ontrose, and wants to leave Henry, but demands a division of their furniture, while her father demands that Henry pay him for the money he advanced to Henry,--\$25.00,-- to buy his old Ford, which Henry has turned over to the brother of the "ontrose belle. Henry certainly knows how to get a good domestic wrangle going when he sets his mind to it,--if any. Fortunately the wife doesn't care anything about keeping the children and Henry just as soon keep them, and so his new falme can start off with a family without great effort,--little "oseph aged about four and "osephine aged about two or three months, I reckon. And so goes family life in the cabins.

At 7:30 we said good night and before eight o'clock I was in bed and asleep.

818

Saturday, Dec. 7th, 1940.

It was raining when I awoke about 2 A. M., and it was still raining when Frank arrived a little after six.

After breakfast, I put on some heavier shoes, and with a raincoat thrown about my shoulders, I walked down the soupy road to the bridge, and across it and so up the River Road toward Felix, the Barber. On the way, I met a nun from the convent, headed toward the saloon to make her purchases of food. Her black veils were blowing in the rain drenched breeze, and her long skirts were dripping with the mud through which she paddled. I said good morning to her, but as near as I could make out, she didn't return my greeting.

Frank and Felix have both told me that one of the nuns at the convent milks a cow both morning and evening, and as always attired in her same religious costume which might have been appropriate four or five hundred years ago. I certainly want to get a snap-shot of the cow being milked by the nun. A nice caption for it would be from Benjamin Franklin, I think: "One should dress suitably for his job. See yon blacksmith in his white silk apron".

At Felix's house I found everyone in the living-room bedroom, Felix and Pearl and a boy from Montrose waiting for a haircut and Moose, Bill's brother, already getting his. We chatted in a gay mood while the work on Moose was being rounded up and while my locks were being shorne,--the "ontrose boy giving up his place in my favor.

Back home, I found scores of darkies milling about the Melrose store, for today they are voting on the question of government control of cotton acreage for the next year.

The mail had come, and as soon as I was back at Lyle's house, Aunt Cammie came over for coffee, and we ran through what little there was, including a note from "agruder Drake, advising me of his efforts to secure the B. L. C. Wailes home in Washington, Miss., and how unsuccessful he had been in his efforts.

After dinner I fixed up my somewhat scattered volumes on Natchez in my house, and Buddy Red dropped by to help me. At two o'clock Aunt Cammie and I resumed our labors on the Straton Diary, devoting ourselves to the "re cher's account of the 1853 epidemic of "ellow "ever in "atchez.

After supper, we read from Dr. "ibley's Journal written in Natchez and letters he had written from Natchitoches, La., to his son in "arolina. J. H. came in to chat for a little



819

Saturday, Dec. 7th, 1940 - page 2.

little while around seven o'clock. He said Henry was at the store drunk and that he had given him a dollar to get a little more fortified, and had advised him to finish his current domestic problems by going home and throwing all his "wife's" effects into the road, and so be done with her. Aunt Cammie thought this might lead to a killing, but J. H. said he doubted it. J. H. spoke of the pleasant evening he had had the night before in talking with the priests whom Celeste was entertaining from the Melrose Catholic Church, -St. Augustin's,--of which she is a member, although everyone else in the congregation is mulatto. J. H. said the priests were remarkably smart men, and were well up on everything that went on in the contemporary world, how they drive to New Orleans, or Oxford, Miss., or St. Louis or wherever a good football game may be scheduled, and how intelligent they are about sports, etc. He said of course they didn't pay much attention to their parishoners, and doubted if they could tell one's name from the other, but they did say mass at the appointed times, and they were checking up on the number of communicants in their parish,--no doubt with a view to taxing them in church fees,--but that showed they had an interest in their locality, even though they didn't care anything about the communicants themselves.

J. H. said the one of their more wealthy communicants,--Clarence Compton,--doesn't come to church any more. It seems that Father Pixley got tangled up with Mrs. Compton, and as this made her husband mad, the latter hasn't been to church since. J. H. also said that the other night, Bill, in driving a long back road, came upon Father Pixley,--the latter's car stuck in the mud. As it was much after dark, and as everyone knows, and as I have heard him declare, Father Pixley isn't interested in the identity of his parishoners,--Bill told the Reverend Father that he had better stick to the gravel roads at such hours. I suppose one of the miracles of the Ages is the fact that Religion has survived in spite of so many weak links.

Eight o'clock and we said good night. The rain had ceased and a new washed sky was spangled with stars and alusiously liquid new crescent moon. By eight thirty I slept.

820

Sunday, December 8th, 1940.

A perfect Spring morning, all blue and gold with a warm breeze from the south-west and an astonishing fragrance from the narcissus beds.

I got out quite a bit of work before breakfast, but was a little pre-occupied when the bacon came up for consideration and Grandpa wasn't on the spot to call for his usual portion. A little later when I stepped out on the gallery, I discovered the reason. Grandpa and little Grandpa were busy knowing on a half grown rabbit,--the little fellow who usually was helping himself to tender grasses in the White Garden morning after morning as I was having my first cup of coffee.

Aunt Cammie came over for a little while about coffee time, but Charles and others arrived and we did no work in consequence.

After dinner, when everyone in the big house had gone into the big road, I thought of taking a walk, but arriving pilgrims held up the plan, and I ended up by going nowhere, save back to my typewriter.

Aunt Cammie and I had supper early with the guests, and when they were gone and Melrose had resumed its accustomed quiet, we read from Dr. Sibbald Dr. Sybley's letters until a little after seven when we said good night.

Since the local Church frowns on entertainments on Saturday nights in this locality in the parish of St. Augustin's, there was the usual Sunday night going's at Ashley Kirkland's a mile or two up the River road toward Bermuda. I suppose it was a dance or a moving picture, and of course I am sure the back door of Ashley's saloon was swinging busily on its hinges. A little before eight o'clock a mulatto fromatchitoches, of not much account, cut Ashley on the forehead in an attempt to stab him. Ashley countered by shooting the man in the head. The latter ran under one of the buildings,--the store or the saloon which is two or three feet above the ground, and they have difficulty in extracting him. But they finally got him out and took him to a physician's in town for treatment, but he died either on the way or in the Dr.'s office.

J. H. had Celeste telephone for the "law", but I guess not much was done about it, for self-defense could be cited as the reason for the killing, and no one felt the world had lost much in the man who had been killed, and I doubt if the world would have been much poorer if both participants had met the same fate.



821

Monday, Dec. 9th, 1940.

It was too warm for a fire when Frank arrived a little after six.

Before 6:30, I was up and headed down the Montrose Lane, covering a couple of miles at pretty good speed and over-taking a mulatto youth who was headed toward town. We walked for a long stretch together.

Near the turn, on my way back, Celeste called to me from her Lincoln. She asked me to ride back to town with her and Betty, her late brother's wife, who is to live inatchitoches from this point on. Celeste had much driver and assistant driver in the form of Sam Peace, and had in view to re-doing of Betty's house, I reckon. I declined her invitation to accompany them.

On the way home I rode for a way with Mr. Bailes, and we drove by way of Bermuda, and thence along the West River road as far as Bill Jones place where Mr. Bailes was doing some business about a tractor. While thus employed, he left me free to get acquainted with a nice white dog and a white cat, which had one tiger colored ear and a tiger colored tail, and I found it pretty and odd.

In the afternoon Aunt Cammie and I did quite a bit of work on old Straton's dull diary, after which Joe Peace stopped in for a few moments. He was at the shooting last night, and spoke of how Ashley shot the mulatto, Hank, after the latter tried to escape after Ashley had received the cut in the head.

Joe said that Hank's mama was with her son at Ashley's, and that the mama was a little drunk. He said Hank's mama was colored but quite light, lighter than Joe, and while not white, she was about my color. I gulped on that one, but realized of course that my affection for the Cane River mulattoes must have given me a little of their hue, just as people's facial appearance sometimes begin to resemble those with whom they live intimately.

After supper, Aunt Cammie and I read from Hall's early History of Natchez, until Celeste and Betty came over to make a courtesy call. They staid until about 7:30, and Aunt Cammie and I said goonight about eight. I was in bed and practically asleep before eight thirty.

822

Tuesday, December 10th, 1940 - page 1.

Five o'clock and still night outside.

By a quarter after, there was a good blaze glowing in the fireplace and I had splashed through a hot bath.

Six-thirty, and I had rounded out a goodly batch of work on my typewriter and ready for a couple of cups of hot Louisiana coffee which Frank brought me at that moment, together with an envelope. In handing me the latter, he passed his hand over his mouth from right to left, which is the sign among the darkies that no reference is to be made to the matter at hand.

Eight o'clock and breakfast arrived as I was finishing my out-going mail, and by nine I had delivered it to the Office. On the store gallery I found but few of the usual hangers-on. Eugene said most of the darkies had gone to town in a truck to get their "oddities", as they describe the commodities which the Government gives out as food surpluses to the indigent.

9:30 and Aunt Cammie came over to have her tomato juice with me as I undertook my fifth cup of coffee. Afterward we sk transcribed extensively from the Straton diary until noon.

We chatted together until 1:30 when we said goodbye and I started for Natchez, Eugene taking me to Montrose to the bus.

Save for a few darkies, there were no other passengers in the bus going to Alexandria, and so I had a good opportunity to hear much of the current scene in Alexandria from the driver who lives there. He spoke at length of the co gestion which has developed rapidly in the city since the work on the surrounding military camps was undertaken. It seems that the town is flooded with hundred of workers both white and black, together with "camp-followers", also of various colorings, not to mention the arrival of thousands of "ational Guards for their period of training.

He cited various instances of panhandling and evidences of other unsocial activities which had never been apparant before this extraordinary activity in town.

He said that prostitution was rife, too, with white women moving into town from "eaven knws where and mulatto and colored girls converging on the place from all the surrounding towns, with "atchitoches contributing heavily in colored prostitutes,--most of whom appeared to be making money if the new clothes and fancy manners they had immediately acquired were any barometer.

He said the white women usually charged three dollars for their parcel in trade, while the mulatto and colored girls were want to charge a dollar. This might account in part for the popularity the latter group seemed to be enjoying with the officers and privates,--all white, of course,--who for the most part hail from the Great Lakes region,--Michigan, Minnesota, Indiana, etc. He said that when these white boys take the colored girls to the movies, the managers request the boys to accompany their colored girl friends to the gallery if they



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elect to sit with them during the show,--the orchestra section of the theatre, of course, being reserved, as is the custom, for white people.

Confirming similar tales I have heard, the driver told me that it was subjecting herself to unpleasantness if not insult, if a white woman does much shopping or otherwise appears on the streets of Alexandria after the soldiers are out of the camps which are some 8 miles outside the city, for it seems that these youths converge on the town immediately after their day's training is completed, and they seem to get great satisfaction in making unpleasant remarks or lewd noises whenever they are in the presence of women. I have no doubt these accounts are inclined to give an intensity of coloring to the scene beyond its actuality, but it also seems that there is great abandon on the part of these youths who seem to have left their usual good manners at home as they headed into their year of training on distant soil.

Four o'clock and my bus left Alexandria for Mississippi. Our road led toward Camp Livingston, ten miles beyond the city. An unending stream of cars whizzed by us, heading toward Alexandria. I suppose there must have been hundreds of them, possibly thousands, driven for the most part by workers on the construction work which is bringing the camp into being. It is said that some of these workers drive as far as 75 or 100 miles to and from their work. From the speed they maintained, I could readily imagine they were anxious to cover a lot of mileage before dark.

This section of Louisiana is gently rolling country, and for miles on either side of the highway pine woods stretch back into the country. The last time I had made this trip, these woods presented a delightful pastoral scene. Today they were a bee-hive of pseudo urbanism, with thousands of cars, trailers, tents and shacks tightly knitted together beneath the trees, smoke curling up from a hundred camp-fires where camp workers were preparing their evening meals or clearing out rubbish from around their temporary habitations. Somehow it suggested a temporary encampment of covered wagons equipped with rubber tires and remains of tin-can banquets, but still paradoxically contrived as to make 1840 projected into 1940 with merely the mode of transportation altered and gasoline replacing the oxen of ancient days. All else seemed as remote from contemporary concepts of everyday necessities.

It was dark before we reached Ferriday, and shortly after leaving the town we could see the lights of the Natchez bridge some 15 or 20 miles away. I tried to sleep, for I had quite a headache, but gave up the idea when some silly person sitting along side tried to keep a conversation going.

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Eight o'clock and we crossed the bridge into Natchez, and a few moments later I had freshened up, taken some ~~xx~~ aspirin and was on my way to Mrs. Moore's where I found a delightful supper awaiting me, including port, creamed ham on toast, brown bread sandwiches, beer and coffee.

Nine o'clock, and we began going through old documents, pamphlets on early Natchez, etc. We were still going after 12 o'clock when Mrs. Moore wanted to read to me from her novel, Mary-Jane.

I was a little listless but we ran along at a fairly good rate, and afterward, we discussed Mrs. Moore's program for Friday when she will speak in New Orleans. She was kind enough to outline what she purposed to say at that time.

About 3:30 I made a gesture to leave, and eventually we said good night, but before I was home and in bed, the clock pointed to something after four, and sleep wasn't long in reaching me, so that I could scarcely say that I had been awake for more than 24 hours.



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The sun was shining in my window when I awoke about seven o'clock.

A hot bath and a cold shower brought me around and before eight I had had my breakfast and was exploring the old houses in the Spanish and French quarters until advancing clouds suggested a drizzle, and I established contact with a telephone to talk with Mary Ambdin. She asked me to come out to dinner but suggested that we would do better if we might talk longer than the noon day meal would permit, and so I decided to run out to Edgewood without waiting to go out with Jeff at noon. It was scarcely eleven when a taxi was whisking me through the traces of the Pine Ridge road, slowing down only as we passed the ruins of Homewood. The driver told me that the Swann's suit against the insurance companies was to be heard in "atchez within the next week or so, and that the insurance companies had consented to pay the insurance covering the house, - I believe the amount was about twenty thousand dollars, but had contested payment of about sixty-thousand dollars covering the furnishings.

It was good to see Mary again, but a little depressing to sense that she wasn't quite up to par and to learn that she had had to spend quite a bit of time during recent weeks in bed. She said that this had lead to one bit of excitement which had been rather wearing on the servants but rather heartening for their mistress. It seems that one afternoon when she had spent the greater part of the day reading in bed, she became conscious of the fact that the servants below were doing a great deal of talking among themselves. As she read on, she realized that they had transferred their activities,--particularly in the field of conversation, to the second floor, for they seemed to be in the hall outside her bed room. She thought nothing of this, assuming that they were chatting away at their work. After a while, however, she confessed to herself that she would be as interested in her book if they would talk a little less and work a little more, since there subdued chatter was so persistent. A little later she heard Leroy's voice more insistent in speaking to Lou, the maid, although Mary couldn't hear the subject of their endless talk. Shortly afterward, Mary heard the door from the hall into the boy's bedroom open,--the boys' room adjoining her own, and wondering what could be going on in there, she called to Lou. A second later, her own door burst open to the accompaniment of loud shouts both from Leroy in the hall and from Lou as she entered the room.

Lou was shouting and crying and moaning and singing all in the same breath, and all to the perplexity of the patient to whose call Lou had responded. It seems that earlier in the afternoon, one of the servants had spoken to Mary from the hall, and receiving no response, had scurried to Leroy to report that something must be wrong with their mistress. For over an hour they had buzzed and talked, and had not be long in coming to the conclusion that Mary had died. Leroy had told Lou she should

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go into the room. Lou said she couldn't go into a room where she might encounter Death, and that Leroy was the one to go in. Leroy however maintained that it wasn't right for a man to go into a lady's bed room and so the talk had gone on and on and the conviction had grown that their Mistress was actually departed this life. Leroy had finally made Lou go into the boys' room with a view of again listening to detect any sound of life from within the bed room, and it was at that moment that both servants had been strangled by the sound of their Mistress's voice, and the sudden bursting of the audible sound from within had completely unnerved them, - hence the tears of joy and moans and cries. Mary said she didn't know whether it was more wearing to get them calmed down again or more heartening to see such evidence of their concern over her good health.

We spoke of the old Chase house, - Antua, and Mary said Jeff had recently spoken to the present owner, the owner of the saw-mill at the forks of the Kingston and Lower Woodville Roads where the white horse tavern formerly stood, and the owner told Jeff that the property would not be taken down the first of January as reported. I hope it doesn't burn or fall down before that date.

I made further inquiries about the Chamberlain woman who had figured in the rape by a negro some years back,--ten possibly,--and evidently to la Chamberlain's delight and complete satisfaction from the various details that we went over, I learned that Miss Chamberlain years before had been married to a Mr. Foulkes. Laurette,--for that was the woman's first name, had never seemed to care much about her husband who was of little account, although she seemed to have a passion for a curious dog by which she next set great store, although no one else ever seemed to comprehend what it was that made the dog so remarkable or so satisfactory to its mistress. On the night Mrs. Chamberlain Foulkes was raped, it seems that the news reached the outside world by the fact that negroes in the quarters behind the old Chamberlain home had her sounds from the house, for Miss Laurette had squealed with delight or vocally protested in such a manner as to impell the negro youth to choke her to restrain her sounds which were uttered for what reason I am uncertain.

Further details of the affair which rounded out the tale somewhat was or were that after her brief sojourn at the sanitarium or hospital and before her return to the Pine Ridge - Church Hill property, she had a gaytime in town and for days talked about the delights of her first ice cream cone and her visit to the skating rink.

As for the youth, after he was condemned to death, having stated in Court that he was quite ready to take his punishment, since he had always wanted to experience the sensation of raping a white woman, had in fact experienced that sensation and found it even more delightful that he had anticipated, and that he was accordingly ready to die, he was visited by three of his friends



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of the Pine Ridge neighborhood, - members of the local colored church who came to watch and pray with him on the last night before the execution. It seems that the three friends started off that last evening by singing and praying and shouting in their best religious style, but the youth regarded all this manifestation with calm indifference and remarked to them that they would ~~be~~ do better to enjoy the night instead of making all of them miserable by their endless racket, and that for himself about whom they seemed so concerned, he had lived his life, had sampled what he chose, and having found it good, was ready to accept the consequences. This is certainly the most remarkable reaction under such circumstances that I ever ran across.

Jeff reached home about one o'clock, and after a short chat, dinner was served in the accustomed manner,--excellence of food and exquisiteness of service.

After dinner we chatted in the drawing room for half an hour while Jeff excused himself for another half hour to look over the public address system which is being installed between the master bedroom upstairs and the kitchen down stairs. The servants in the kitchen,--Lou and B., go into gales of giggles at the prospect of the operation of this device but remark a little ruefully that ~~now~~ now they will not be able to say anything in the kitchen without the whole household hearing it.

When I said goodbye to Mary on the front gallery, I was glad to see that the rain clouds had disappeared and a brilliant sunshine had dried up the late morning shower. Jeff and I rode along speedily back to town, for the most part discussing Mary about whom he is somewhat worried, I believe, and about insurance on country houses. In view of the twenty thousand dollars insurance which the Swanns carried on Homewood, I expressed surprise that such an imposing mansion should have carried so little, since I believe its original cost must have run close to a half a million in contemporary values. But Jeff said it was customary to carry rather small insurance on country houses, and that he carried but five thousand dollars on Edgewood.

Back in town, I said goodbye to Jeff and went over to Mrs. Moore. With her daughter, Mrs. Carruthers, we rode north on upper Rankin street, and nearly at the end, we turned West and followed an old, old trace road, exceedingly narrow in places, and withal quite as beautiful as I have seen in the immediate environs of ~~at~~chez. It may have been the old Pine Ridge road of ante-bellum days, and from the ancient cedars which we saw in groups from time to time and from the old tell-tale cisterns, it was obvious that large plantation houses had once dotted this area, but all of them seemed to have disappeared with the years.

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Retracing our route after some distance, we crossed upper Pine Street as we headed East, and in Shaddyside Lane, we passed the old home of Judge North, prominent in ante-bellum days in ~~at~~chez. It is a fine brick house, is occupied at present by one of the city commissioners, and in the square city block which the property embraces, one may see a variety of ante-bellum out-buildings, charming in design but somewhat depressing in their neglect.

From Judge North's, we continued East by the old, yet somewhat new Orphanage,--I believe the building covers two eras in its extensive construction. I am not sure as to the exact data covering the older section of the building, but I believe it to be the old mansion of St.-John Elliott, known as Devereux. To the East and West great columns run two stories in height, and this section of the building I believe is the original home. To this was subsequently added, as I understand it, large brick wings which tend to dwarf the original mansion. I must check up further on particulars covering this property, for I had always supposed that there was but one Devereux in ~~at~~chez,--the one on the ~~at~~chez,-- Washington road, on the out-skirts of ~~at~~chez, but it seems that this may also have been Devereux, too.

A little further along, we crossed the railroad tracks near the modern shirt factory and stopped for a moment to gaze at the fine old mansion which stands to the East of the factory. It is The Cedars, and was once occupied by Dr. Brenham, in ante-bellum days. No one seems to know anything about the history of this fine old mansion, when it was built or by whom and how it fell upon evil days. I believe it is unoccupied at the present time.

Further along, by some quarter of a mile possibly, we stopped at Miss or Mrs. Jedicies place. It is also a fine old property, not so imposing as The Cedars which reminded me somewhat of Belmont or Rosalie, but altogether charming in its noble simplicity. It is a story and a half house with a gallery across the front, and charming out buildings, - some in wood and some in brick, and several of them connected with the main house by little covered galleries. No one seems to know anything of the history of this house either, nothing as to the date of its building,--I suppose it might have been in the 1820's or 1830's from its appearance, nor anything as to its former occupants.

As Mrs. Jedicies was not at home, we drove back toward town, striking St. Catherine's street just above the old slave hospital. Heading toward town, Mrs. Moore pointed out the great tract of land to the left of the street, behind the old houses that line the road way. It was back in that property on a rise of ground that the house of Judge Kemp had stood in ante-bellum times. Judge Kemp, I remember correctly, was the grand father of Varina Howells, who was later to



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later to marry Jefferson Davis at the Briars. She came here one day to call on her grandmother. Being a small child, Varina was enchanted on her arrival to see a neat little broom standing by the fireplace on which flowed an opulent fire. The little broom was new, and while it looked like a child's edition of the type the servants used, she was told that it was designed for use by the fireplace to sweep straying ashes back into the fireplace. The little girl was so enchanted by the sight of this toy that she couldn't resist giving a few whisks to the ashes on the hearth. But her grandmother admonished her that the broom wasn't for little girls to use, saying that she must never touch it, for if she were to do so, she might burn down the house. Reluctantly the little girl put it back beside the tongs and utensils along side, but still gazed at the little broom with eyes of longing.

Shortly afterward, Varina's grandmother left the room to welcome guests who had come over to Judge Kemps home for dinner. While her grandmother was out of the room, little Varina saw her big opportunity to try out the little broom just once more. Grabbing it gingerly she gave a few sweeps at the ashes. It was just the thing for a little girl to play at housekeeping. But at that moment she heard the voices of her grandmother's guests, and fearful of being reproved for having disregarded her grandmother's admonitions, she hurriedly put the little broom in the closet built in at the side of the fireplace and returned to her little rocking chair in which she had been seated when her grandmother left the room.

There was an interval of conversation all'round, and then the ~~xxxxxxxx~~ hostess and guests passed on from the drawing room into to dinner. Little Varina was slightly uneasy during the meal, but her nervousness was attributed to the fact that she was unaccustomed to dinning with grown ups. And so conversation ran along until just before the desert was served, when a servant rushed into the dinning room to cry out that the house was on fire. Everyone fled to the garden, as the upper stoies burst into flames and a section of the lower floor buckled in its supports. During dinner the fire had gained such headway that nothing could be saved, and thus Judge Kemp's fine mansion passed forever from the "atchez scene, - thanks to Varina and her little broom.

From St. Catherine's Street, we passed through the center of town, continuing as far toward the River as Rosalie, and then turned to the left to explore the old section of Natchez,-- still little changed in the last 150 or 200 years, to that part known as French town. Here we stopped to look over the construction of the old Brille house, a substantial two and a half building, obviously dating from an early period. The ground floor is six or eight inches below the ground,--that is to say the floor of the ~~ground~~ first floor. A flight of steps leads to a gallery which runs across the front of the house with its floor forming a roof to the lower gallery and its own second story room joining with the roof of the house proper and so continuing up to the peak which shelters the attic. The house itself is perhaps 30 feet long,--and faces the bayou.

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There are numerous other and smaller houses in this little "fauborough" and all of them of considerable age. Negroes occupy all of these, it appeared, save for those which are being slowly torn apart for the wood which the darkies are apparently taking apart a piece at a time for kindling.

From "French town", we continued South, after leaving the Mississippi bridge approach to our right. Not far along this road one passes the place where John Girault is buried. It is was his property in early times and a section of it was left so that even though the plantation itself might change hands, the family grave yard would always be a separate entity and inviolate. A few years ago a shark sold this parcel of land to an old darky preacher, and on the sight of the Girault tombstones he built his little shack. When the fraud had been discovered, the old darkie was faced with eviction, but he was never put out and the shack still stands there, with a marker, erected by the U. A. R., or some such organization, indicating the spot where the remains of Girault lies buried.

Continuing our southward tour, we passed by the entrance to the Briars, and eventually dropped down the steep road which leads to the River's edge where the Government boats,--dredges, cutters and what not dock. There is also a thriving lumber mill down here under the bluffs, and scores of cars of the workmen per neatly parked in a reserved space. Back up the bluffs, we continued along southward, and soon turned in to the left, following a lovely Trace road, which was varied in places by great drops off into deep bayous on either side. After a mile or so, we turned in at a plantation,--Magnolia Bluffs. A photograph remains of this fine old plantation home which was burned but a few years back. It was a noble brick building, with great double galleries running across both the front and back of the house. In design, it must have somewhat resembled Springfield, in Jefferson County, but from the photograph of the building, it appears to have been a more elegant house, and possibly of latter construction than the Thomas Marsden Green home.

On its foundations, its present owner, a Mrs. Tate, has built a rather fancy log cabin into the construction of which she put ten thousand dollars. With that money she would have done better to erect a simple frame house sympathetic to the period of the former dwelling. From the front gallery, one may walk perhaps 30 or 40 feet to the edge of the bluff which drops straight down about 200 feet. The view from the gallery of the former home must have been magnificent, for the eye sees spread below it a great stretch of farm land, and beyond the Mississippi glints in the sun, and beyond one catches a glimpse of the low lands of Louisiana.

I know nothing of the history of Magnolia Bluff nor any of its former owners. Obviously it was a splendid Plantation home, and there still remain evidences of fine out buildings, emplacements of summer houses and terraces in the gardens.



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But the afternoon was beginning to close in, and so we drove away from Magnolia Bluffs and through its lovely plantation road, back to the main highway, and thence along another road to the right, passing by Glencannon, Providence, Richmond, etc., and eventually struck the lower Woodville road, and so entered Natchez again after passing Gloucester, Longwood, Hawthorn, etc.

We said goodbye to Mrs. Carruthers and took a little turn around the Court House Square before supper. We remarked upon the old Spanish building which had formerly stood where the present City Hall now stands. I am glad photographs remain of this old Spanish building which was probably one of the finest of its type in America, having housed the official executives of the Spanish Governors before the United States took over Mississippi. The City Fathers pulled the building down a few years ago as a step of progress.

On the North side of the square we stopped to look at the Presbyterian Church. I had always been under the impression that it was designed by Levy Weeks who built Auburn, but I learned that the present structure dates from the 1840's, having replaced the original Weeks architectural masterpiece which had been built some 25 years earlier on the same spot, or rather above the same spot, for the original Presbyterian Church was built on a much higher elevation which was cut down to prepare the foundations for the present structure.

In Audubon's painting of Natchez, made in the 1820's, I believe the original Presbyterian Church does not appear, although in the lower right hand corner of the picture, one will notice the columned court house which still stands in the square which spreads out before the Church. The dome on the Court house was removed some years ago, although the rest of the Court House remains as it was in those days.

After passing around the square, and remarking upon the forlorn Lawyer's Row in its present degradation and Dr. Mercer's house, just across the street to the West of the Court House, now so greatly altered as to be scarcely recognizable, we continued around to Main Street, and partook of much needed food. After supper we walked up Main Street, remarking upon the location of the old Catholic Church which formerly stood on Cotton Square, but now merely another store half way along the East side of Commerce Street between Main and Franklin. Immediately behind these buildings facing Commerce runs a little thoroughfare. On the next street beyond Church Alley, and running parallel to Commerce between Main and Franklin, stood the Methodist Church. It was here that Jenny Lind sang in the 1850's,--probably about 1853, for it was the largest auditorium in Natchez at the time,--the opera house having been destroyed by the tornado of 1840 or possibly burned between that date and the arrival of the Swedish Nightingale.

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At Mrs. Moore's again, and fortified with a bottle of port and an arresting stack of papers, we ran through the latter, jumping from century to century and episode to episode in the amazing history of the Natchez region.

We spoke of old Mrs. Surget whom Mrs. Moore had known in her latter years while living at Gloucester. I suppose she was then in her late 70's or possibly in her 80's, and had not long before married as her second husband young Mr. Lennox Stanton, who had a short time before been running Windy Hill Manor properties for his kin folk, the Stanton girls. At the time this youth left the Windy Hill girls to manage and assume control of the Surget properties, Miss Elizabeth had been furious at his "desertion" and had written a scathing poem about Lennox and old Mrs. Surget. Mrs. Moore doesn't know of this ode, but I have heard about it from those who have seen it and they say it is in Miss Elizabeth's best style. I must write her today for a copy of it.

But the story of Mrs. Surget, who didn't reveal her marriage to the youth 40 or 50 years her junior until her will disclosed it, is a story unique in the annals of a locality which passes by the extraordinary as a matter of course.

As a girl, old Mrs. Surget had lived at Arlington, one of the more perfect mansions of the 1820's still maintained in Natchez. Mrs. Surget had been born Catherine Boyd, and Arlington at that time was the Boyd home. As a little girl Catherine had played with a little mulatto boy who lived at Arlington. He was Catherine's half brother, off-spring of Catherine's father and a slave. The children got along beautifully together, and it is said that little Catherine probably never knew at this time that her little companion was her blood relation.

As a girl Catherine was sent away to school,--possibly to Europe, and while her family entertained lavishly in Natchez, and became somewhat involved in financial problems, Catherine was leading a very sheltered if not cloistered life during the years she was growing up at school. At 17, her schooling over, she returned to Arlington, a stunningly beautiful daughter of the elegant but hard pressed Mr. Boyd. Mr. Boyd's cousin was the wealthy James Surget, a young man who had been around considerably, and with a view of solving the Boyd's monetary problems, Catherine's father arranged with the Surgets to marry his daughter into that family. Matters were arranged without consent or consideration of Catherine, and shortly a most fashionable wedding was celebrated.

On their honeymoon, James Surget took his bride, Catherine to New Orleans by boat. He had thought of everything and even had provided a personal maid for his bride. This colored girl undertook to comb Catherine's hair shortly after the bridal party had embarked. The first stroke of the comb seemed to pull Catherine's tresses unduly. She said nothing. A second and a third yank, however, brought forth an admonition to the colored girl to apply the comb more gently to avoid hurting her mistress. To Catherine's astonishment, however, the colored girl replied that if she had hurt her in this manner, she was glad for it was her intention to



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do so. Loosing complete control, the colored girl poured out her dislike for Catherine, saying that she hated everything about her and that she would do everything she could to make life miserable for her, since the young Mr. Surget was really her man, that she and he had been in the most intimate relations for ever so long and that she hoped Miss Catherine would never be able to take him away from her.

Up until this time, Catherine had never heard that her Grandfather, old Colonel Pingaman had maintained a colored family near Choctaw while he was living at Arlington, nor had she ever dreamed that the little mulatto boy of her childhood had been her half brother. Sheltered in her school days by the refinements of one of the finest finishing schools, it is probably that Catherine had never even realized that white men ever contracted liasons with slaves. This sudden bursting of the scandal that her own husband had been in love with this colored girl whom he had brought on his honeymoon as maid to his bride was staggering.

But the marriage had been performed and the couple and their aid had embarked on their honeymoon, and Catherine went through with her part of the program. I am not certain of the details which followed, but shortly after their return to Natchez, a child was born to the Surgets,--Carlotta, who is the present Mrs. David McKittrick. And Mrs. Surget quitted her husband, took a couple of rooms on Main Street in the old bick building just one block south of the present Post Office, and on the opposite side of the street, and here the beautiful Mrs. Surget lived for years. Her husband allowed her fifteen dollars a month, and it is said she was permitted to purchase certain articles from the stores to be charged to her husband's account. Sometimes, it is said, she would purchase certain articles, and then return them and receive cash instead of credit on them. Mr. Surget, in the mean time was living, I believe, at his Cherry Grove plantation on the old Kingston Road. There child, Carlotta, lived some of the time with her mother and some of the time with her father, although for the most part she was away at school. It should be added that Mr. Surget maintained his original colored girl on the plantation where he raised quite a family from this union and provided the family with certain parcels of property in his life time so that they would be secure against poverty after his death. He lived on and on however, and Mrs. Surget maintained her living quarters in the two rooms on Main Street.

Long after Mrs. Surget had reached middle age, her husband finally died, and the immense Surget properties passed to her. Having been robbed of a husband and home life and everything but a meager existence, Mrs. Surget at last found herself well provided in earthly goods, and being unaccustomed to the management of plantations of which she had inherited several by her husband's death, she employed young Mr. Stanton who had had experience in such matters in operating Windy Hill Manor. Although never reported in the papers, Mrs. Surget must have married Lemnox Stanton some time after he had undertaken to assist her in the management of her property. Mrs. Surget took up her residence at Gloucester

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and here old friends called on her from time to time. One of my friends was a guest in the house one afternoon when some mention was made about the construction of Gloucester on the second floor. Mrs. Surget readily took her guest up stairs to point out the peculiarity of the architectural arrangement and seemed to take no notice of the fact that in her bed room a pair of pajamas and a man's trousers were hanging on the foot of the double four poster bed. At this time Mrs. Surget was well advanced in years, but still beautiful. Lemnox was about the house, and was introduced as Mr. Stanton, although Mrs. Surget always maintained her former husband's name.

We touched upon other subjects, and Natchez curiosities of those who formerly and some who still do sit in high place.

But by midnight, we turned to the speech Mrs. Moore would make on Friday to the Big Ten University Club in New Orleans, and after running through it, and a little more of the port, we said goodnight, and half an hour later I was at home and in bed.



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It was a busy day which began a little after six and ran through until well after mid-night. I saw lots of people,--rather more than I needed to, and yet with each, the time was passed so agreeably.

-----Lily Vidal Davis Boatner, Mrs. Dr. Smith,  
Nellie Wailles Brandon, Kate Davis, Roane Flemming Byrnes and  
Charles and Myrtie Byrnes.

I took a walk after breakfast and dropped by Ellicott's Hill, to look over the old Tavern which had housed so many important Natchez citizens, either as guests of the Tavern or owners of the edifices when it became a private dwelling,--old Blennerhasset, Ellicott, Samuel Brooks, the first Mayor of Natchez, etc., etc.

In regard to the latter, I must record the unusual notice he sent out at the time of Mrs. Brooks' death. It will be recalled that as Mayor of Natchez, he had put a curb on some of the more flagrant practices which operated under the hill,-- such as the use of gambling devices and tables of chance which were set up in the streets under the hill and conducted in a skin-flint manner to entice people who might have passed by the gaming houses and brothels on their way to and from the boat landing.

In retaliation, the rough necks Under-the-Hill, came up to the city on the bluff, stormed the Mayor's residence, and after verbal obscenities, began hurling brickbats through the windows,--one of which struck Mrs. Brooks and caused her death.

As was customary in the first half of the 19th century, the bereaved husband sent out death notices to friends and relatives bidding them to the funeral. But the Mayor's was different in design from any other such death notices which have ever come to my attention. On the reverse side of the card, announcing the funeral, appeared the fac-simile of the Ace of Spades,--the Death Card,--which grimly be-spoke an inescapable portent for the riff-raff Under-the-Hill.

And in line with the determination which brought about such an extraordinary card, the Mayor, after the funeral, scourged the Under-the-Hill dens, so that gamblers, tricksters, harlots and murders and all the back-wash of the under world were scattered asunder.

I looked over the various pieces of furniture in the Tavern and found nearly all of them interesting and many of them fine. I was impressed by a simple old 4 poster made of china-berry wood,-- the only one I recall having been made of such material. I chatted for a while with the widow of Dr. Smith,--a nice person who is doing a little clerical work here at the moment.

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It will be recalled that last Winter or early Spring, Dr. Smith's home burned to the ground. It was Inglewood,-- the first old mansion on the left as one heads south on the Woodville-Kingston road after leaving the turn which branches from Homochitta Street,-- the Woodville-Kingston keeping to the left while the Lower Woodville Road keeping to the right.

This fine old home was built in the 1820's or 1830's and coincidentally it was occupied at several times through the years by Mrs. of prominence. It was here at Inglewood in the late 1850's that the Blackburns lived. There were two daughters in the family who inherited the property, but sometime after the war they were forced to sell their property, inasmuch as public opinion operated against their entertainment of colored men.



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From Dr. Calhoun to Dr. Smith, that is to say, from about 1830 or 35 to 1940, runs the history of Inglewood or Ingleside, whichever it is called. For in the Spring of 1940, this famous old home was consumed by fire. At the time, Dr. Smith was exhausted from his professional duties and from great physical tiredness. A few days after the fire, he stopped at a drugstore in "atchez with Mrs. Smith, and there administered an injection of anti-influenza toxin, and through some curious reaction of this medicine, he sank to the floor dead. Mrs. Smith stood this shock nobay, and as the destruction of her home had taken it off the season's pilgrimage, Ellicott's or Connolly's Tavern was put on the pilgrimage in its place, and the proceeds,--about a thousand dollars, was turned over to Mrs. Smith. She has subsequently built a small cottage close to the ruins of the old mansion, and there lives with her two small children.

From Connolly's Tavern, I dropped around to the Hotel for a couple of telephone calls and thence along Main Street. I stopped for a moment to chat with Joe Dixon, whom I hadn't seen in a couple of years. He is still the same five cent cigar, only a little more expensive. He is now a Colonel on the Governor's staff, and seems to have added several tail-feathers to his pride in this phony title. He was everything gracious and spoke much of French politics, etc., of which he knows nothing. He admonished me to visit Choctaw, which is now being restored, and very well done, as I understand from those who would know, in spite of the fact that Joe has something to do about spending the W.P.A. moneys on it. Joe said that I should ask for Mr. So and So, the head of the restoration, and explain to him that Joe Dixon had,--and here he hesitated, because he had intended to say "sent me around", and yet he didn't quite dare say that, and so after ~~him~~ clearing his throat and starting over again, suggested that if I were to present myself as his personal friend, the chief of the restoration program would be glad to show me every courtesy. I told him I might get around to the place. I wish I had time, but I didn't, for I should have liked to see how the job is progressing.

I next dropped by to see Mrs. Kate Davis, and found her as cordial and charming as ever and entirely belying her 80 odd years. We went right into our pet subject of conversation,--Natchez in the old days, and she told me much of interest in regard to various persons I had recently run across in the Diaries Aunt Mammie and I had been reading.

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First of all we spoke of Eliza Lloyd Magruder, and some of the fine pieces of furniture which had been in the old White Turpin home on the Moragantown Road when Eliza lived there before and after the Civil War. After Eliza's death, and the house was occupied by Joe and Sue Hutton, Eliza's nephew and his wife, Miss Kate spoke of the steady decline of the value of the plantation itself and how all the fine old heirlooms in the house were sold off one by one as Sue, in particular, pursued her addiction to drugs. Miss Kate said that the wife of the President of Jefferson College,--sometime in the 1880's or 1890's, I believe, had invited Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Hutton and Mrs. Archer,--Bad Lily,--to dine with her at Jefferson College one day. Mrs. Archer and Mrs. Davis had driven out from "atchez by carriage, stopping on the way to Washington to pick up Sue Hutton at Oakland.

Mrs. Davis said it was the last time she was ever at Oakland and that in reality she was disgusted with the way Sue had let things slide. Not even a pig would have lived in a manner Sue was existing at lovely Oakland. In her bedroom there were still a few pieces of furniture left, but there were no longer any sheets on the beds, and Sue seemed quite unmindful indifferent to this degradation.

Mrs. Archer and Mrs. Davis were distressed to learn on their arrival that Sue would not be able to go on to Jefferson College with them for luncheon. On making inquiry as to the reason, Sue explained that the real reason was because she no longer had a pair of shoes to wear.

But she counted without the intelligence of Mrs. Davis who is first of all a great lady. For Mrs. Davis was equal to the occasion, and said that for herself she didn't care whether or not she wore shoes at the luncheon, and that if Sue could wear her shoes, she might do so. Sue tried on Mrs. Davis' shoes, and as they fitted, both ladies mounted their carriage, and drove off to Washington barefoot. Being a great lady, Mrs. Davis could afford to go barefoot. Being a mere bag, Sue couldn't.

Arriving at the College, Mrs. Davis explained to her hostess that she had arrived without shoes, whereupon slippers were immediately hunted up for her, and the luncheon went off without a hitch. Sue never did seem to have any qualms about having worn Mrs. Davis' shoes, and of course Mrs. Davis never even gave the matter a second thought. It might be added that it was Sue and Joe Hutton who sold off the Walles heirlooms, including the secretary filled with priceless manuscripts, which had been stored at Oakland after the Wiles moved to Pennsylvania, and of course, none of these heirlooms were ever traced nor the papers recovered. When Oakland burned a few years later, all these objects were said by the Huttons to have been consumed by the fire, although everyone knew that the demand for money to purchase more and more drugs had just about swept the house clean before the fire finished it.



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Mrs. Davis had often spoken to me of the son of Joe and Sue Hutton who is now in his 50's, and works for the Natchez laundry,-- the Oakland plantation having gone to pieces by the neglect and erosion which the indifference of his parents permitted in their addiction to drugs. Nearly everyone has spoken as though both the husband and wife were drug addicts, although Mrs. Davis thinks that only Henry Hutton's mother was an addict, and that other causes than drugs may have caused the loss of the fine fortune which Henry's great grandfather, White Turpin, and his wife, Lavania Magruder Turpin left to their descendants. It is curious to note that in spite of the fact that Henry's mother had been the one most addicted to drugs, it was she who ~~xxx~~ survived her husband by many years and lived on to a ripe old age.

I had heard that it was Henry Hutton who had rescued the Diary of "Eliza Lloyd" Magruder from the fire at Oakland, and that half of it was in his possession when his own home burned a few years ago when he had his wife had been out on a Sunday picnic. It is strange that the only thing rescued from the second fire was this part of Eliza's Diary,--the original of which at the moment is being copied by L. S. U.

It seems that Henry had heard of my interest in Eliza, and because of this, had expressed a wish to meet me. Mrs. Davis asked me if I minded. Naturally I told her I should be honored.

She accordingly telephoned the laundry and Henry drove up in the delivery wagon a few moments later. I found him a kindly person, looking a little like Alexander Woolcott and obviously too fine a person, both in education and culture to be wasting his time driving a laundry wagon. But thus things are in life.

Our conversation was short, and devoted mostly to the Magruder family. He said he had often wondered where his middle name,-- Kingsley, had come, but had recently learned that it was a maternal grandfather who had been the first American Ambassador to England. This statement, of course, needs a little clarification, although the general thought behind it may be true. I don't know the name of the first accredited American Ambassador to the Court of Saint James, although, after Franklin's ante-Revolutionary mission, I was under the impression that it might have been Adams or someone of the sort, but possibly it was Kingsley,--but if not, possibly he had some sort of a Consular post in Great Britain, for people in Natchez never seem to recognize much difference between an Ambassador and a Consul.

Henry told me that he had loaned the part of Eliza's Diary which he owned to L. S. U. for copying, and that as soon as it was returned to him, I might borrow it. I appreciated this, as I feel as Aunt Cammie does, that the value of the copy which we have already made would be enhanced in interest, if we could include photostats of the handwriting of "Eliza Lloyd".

As Henry was leaving the house, an episode took place which

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which was embarrassing.

Just as Henry got into his truck, a voice called down from up stairs to Mrs. Davis, asking if that was Henry who was below. When told that it was, this masculine voice remarked that there were a couple of dirty shirts upstairs and that Henry should take them back with him to the laundry.

In order to feign concern over other matters, I up-set an ash tray I had been using, but Mrs. Davis wasn't at all ruffled by this unexpected flight into courtesy, and she called to Henry to wait just a moment, and then turning to the stair-well, asked that the ~~xxx~~ soiled things be thrown down to her. They were, and making a neat little package of them, she took them to the door to give Henry.

The voice from above was that of Mrs. Davis's son-in-law, a rather dull fellow, named Boatner, or Boettner, or something of the sort. He is of a well-known Louisiana family, from Concordia, I believe, and married Mrs. Davis's daughter, Lily Vidal Davis. It is said that Lily, in her work for the Natchez Garden Club, helps support him and their 10 year old daughter, and that although bubbling over with strength and good health, the husband is too dumb to hold a job. During prohibition, it is said that he did used to run liquor from some place in Louisiana to Mississippi, but of course with the passing of prohibition, that job seems to have played out..

When Mrs. Davis returned to the drawing room, I launched into conversation about the Diary of Dr. Joseph Straton which Aunt Cammie and I have been working on. Mrs. Davis said she laughed when I remarked in a letter to her that she "might have heard of Dr. Straton", for in reality, he had been pastor of the Presbyterian Church for 60 years, and she had long been a member of that organization. Naturally I was delighted that she could give me some personal reminiscences, and she had plenty of them to give.

It seems that Dr. Straton was a very kind man, and was equally popular with all the members of his church, - white or colored, as well as with members of all the other denominations, including Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Jewish, etc., and at his funeral in the early 1900's Natchez probably saw a day of greater mourning than it had ever seen for the passing of any other citizen.

Dr. Straton had come to Natchez in 1853, ~~xxx~~ 1843,--eighteen forty three, I believe, and for more than 60 years had held the same pulpit. As a preacher, he was as dull as ditch water, but he was a kindly man and everyone admired his great goodness and thoughtfulness for others,--not only in his own church membership but in all walks of life, either within or without the confines of any church.



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Samrt man that he was, Dr. Straton, after his wife's death in Natchez in the early 1850's, he had married Miss Caroline Williams.

Now the Williams family were about as important as anyone in Natchez in the 1850's, for not only did the Williams have plenty of money, property and worldly goods, but also died their close relatives.

The Williams, for example, lived at beautiful Ashburn,--one of the major stars in that surprising galaxy of architectural jewels which taken together form one of the most opulent group of ante-bellum homes in a limited area that one could ever imagine. Their neighborhood included Arlington, "unleith, "outhlands, Auburn, Gloucester, Landowlyn, "awthorn, "enilworth, Ashburn, and "eaven knows what all, with each so closely adjoining, in spite of their own exclusive parks, that one was almost within calling distance from the gallery of one mansion to that of the next. Longwood is a mansion which should also be included in this astonishing list, and at Longwood lived the Dr. and Mrs. Haller Nutt's. Dr. Nutt was unquestionably one of the richest men of Natchez at the time,--possibly one of the riches in the country, and "rs. Nutt was a Williams girl,--sister of "rs. Joseph Stratton.

By his first wife, Dr. Stratton had had a couple of children, and by his second wife, nee Williams, he had one or two more. One of the latter batch was Joe, and Joe was everything which his father wasn't. But it is said that many a person in Dr. Stratton's flock continued to go to Church in spite of the old man's endless prayers and spiritless sermons, thanks to the antics of his son, Joe. For as communicatns kneeled at prayer, they would suddenly realize that someone next to them would be passing a paper in their direction, and at the top of the paper it always said: "Pass this", and beneath it would be a hilarious caricature of the old Reverend, doing the most outrageous things, --and perpetually and unceasingly young Joe was dashing off fresh caricatures of his father, as the old man droned on and th audience's mind groped after some sort of entertainmen or at least som thing to arrest their wandering minds.

But Joe never did anything with the talent which God had given him and eventually died an alcoholic, as, it is said, sometimes did happen to the off-spring of good but over pious fatherly clerics.

I elieve Joe had a couple of children,--a boy Sidney, who also died an alcoholic, and a daughter, who ar married twice,--her last husband being Dunbar Merrill, by hom whe had one daughter. Mrs. Dunbar "erril,--named Caolun after her grandmother, Caroline Williams Stratton, is at the moment the firend of "agruder Drake, and figures in certain phases of Natchez activities, although not always to the advantage of her social reputation, as I understand it.

Another daughter or granddaughter of Dr. Straton, married Mrs. Davis's son, Vidal Davis, and now lives at South Lodge, a property in Natchez which once belong th the "illiams family.

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As for the reasons why one person married another, they are so varied, of course, and frequently so manifold in a single instance that few people, even those who take on the marriage ties actually understand the ramifications operating to bring about such a state.

In the case of Dr. Straton, he of course procured a mother for his three children by the first wife, and at the same time, in marrying Caroline "illiams, he assured himself of wealth and social position in the Natchez country which was probably not exceeded by any other divine in ante-bellum America.

"or the "illiams family was rich and the 2nd "rs. Straton's home,--Ashburn, was about as delicious a mansion as any in that astonishing galaxy in the environs just south of the city limits.

And of course, Mrs. Straton, 2nd, was sister to Mrs. Haller Nutt, one of the riches and most cultivated planters in America and the family connections of the "illiams and the Nutts guaranteed a impregnable place for the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church.

In years after the war,--Dr. Straton remained in the same pulpit until 1903,--several of his friends, earnestly inquired of him why he remained ~~xxx~~ at the Natchez Post when in reality, its importance had sharply fallenoff at the close of the Civil War and the limits of his good offices were sharply curtailed. Dr. Straton admitted quite frankly to these friends that he realized that he ight do better both in clerical and in financial considerations if he were to accept the calls which were frequently made to him from more important posts in great centers of population elsewhere in the United States. But he declared with equal frankness that everyone in Natchez had known Caroline since she was a little girl,-- and having known her, taken everything she said as a matter of course, while elsewhere people would not have this consideration and understanding, and in consequence his own position would forever be jeopardized by her flippancy.

For it was quite true that Caroline observed no rules of respect for her husband's position in the church and in her own conduct, - while always exemplary in everything but indifference to silliness, frequently embarrassed Dr. Straton beyond words. For example, a group of Church elders or prominent citizens might be calling at the Straton home on business with Dr. Straton, and his wife, as the hour rolled around toward dinner time, might startle her guests by suddenly announcing: "Well, you'll just have to excuse me for a moment 'til I go see what's going on in the kitchen. If I don't watche those servants, there'll certainly be no meal for 'the old rooster'." -- The old rooster, of course was her husband, and she would giggle and the guests would seem a little confused and Dr. Straton would seem to let the remark pass by without noticing it.

Caroline also seemed quite indifferent to the confusion she



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to exactitude in her choice of words, evidently feeling that it didn't matter what she said if one word, sounding like another, were thrown into a sentence at random. It was always a question if she really knew no better or if she thought it added to her gaiety of tone and brilliancy of manner. It is said that she probably never intended to introduce ~~xxx~~ indecencies into the parlors of the Manse, but she didn't seem to mind if people smiled at her unexpected substitutions of one word for another which vaguely sounded like the one which was expected. For example, she might ask a gentleman if he would mind opening the "traction" for better circulation, while she knew perfectly well, probably that the word she had in mind was "Transom", and at a Ladies Aid meeting she might remark that the old rooster last night had intercourse with his Bible until after mid-night when I hope she had the word recourse in mind.

But be all this as it was, Dr. Straton was smart enough to realize that while these things might go on without serious consequences in his Natchez household, he might encounter the gravest difficulties elsewhere, and so he renounced all thought of ever accepting other posts,--and probably for himself and family it was much better, for certainly life in Natchez, even after the War was sufficiently abundant for the William-Nutt families, and then too there was the added advantage to Dr. Straton that he was the dean of all the town's clergymen, was infinitely popular with all groups, sects and classes,--and it must be added, he probably would never have found a charge where life would have had half so many amenities as it did in Natchez where he held his pulpit in the "first Presbyterian Church" from 1843 to 1903 and where people were most likely to make allowances for his silly wife.

While on the subject of the Stratons, it might be interesting to record an episode which took place a week ago in which his granddaughter, Caroline, widow of Dunbar Merrill figured.

The Pilgrimage Garden club decided to give a series of Saturday night dances at Stanton Hall. Among those present who bore names of the old Natchez families was Caroline Dunbar Merrill and the former wife of George Marshall, 3rd, of "andwdowne". It escapes me who ~~xxxx~~ the former Mrs. Marshall was before her marriage, but she was of Natchez. After bearing George two children, she divorced him, married an army officer, and is now living with him, although protesting her continued love for George. When the Army Officer moved from his post in the North to Florida, George's ex-wife stopped off in Natchez for several days. According to the local gossips, George wooed his former wife ardously, taking her to social gatherings, etc.,--one of which included the Saturday night dance at Stanton Hall. She was arrayed in an ultra smart gown of Paris design, and appeared in sharp contrast to the rather sloppy Mrs. Merrill. As the evening progressed, it became evident

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that there was no love lost between the ex- Mrs. Marshall and Mrs. Merrill, and it was unfortunate when the two "ladies" found themselves in the same group standing about the improvised bar.

Outwardly everything was decorous until Mrs. Merrill, jockeying herself next to the ex-Mrs. Marshall, flicked a full glass of punch down the front of the lovely Paris creation. Immediately Mrs. Merrill laughed an apology to which the ex-Mrs. Marshall dismissed the incident at an inadvertence, remarking that the frock could easily be cleaned. A few moments later, however, Mrs. Merrill again dished a glass of punch down Mrs. M.'s front, and the intention was so obvious that the ex-Mrs. Marshall ~~came~~ countered with a full glass of a similar which partially drenched Mrs. Merrill. Instantly there was an exchange of "you dirty So-and-so," and in a twinkling a pretty kettle of fish was brewing. And thus the party ended in a free for all, the ladies being separated before they came to blows, and henceforth the Saturday night balls at Stanton Hall were discontinued.

At 11:30, we shared a cup of tea together, talking the while over interesting bits of china in the collection which had come down to Mrs. Davis from garrulous relatives, including that of two or three elegant pieces,--pure white, with a narrow band of green and a line of gold on the rims, which had formerly been part of the household service at Duck Pond Plantation which the Davises had owned during the War. The plantation home had been burned and the place itself sold, but a few years ago, these fine pieces were turned up from the place they had been buried during the war by a man who was ploughing. The present owner of the place had immediately turned them over to Mrs. Davis.

Before leaving, Mrs. Davis asked me to always feel that her home was my own whenever I came to Natchez to spend any time,--a courtesy which I found twice kindly in view of the rather numerous family she always has under her roof. She said that early in January she hopes to get over to Alexandria, La., with Bud Lily, and that they will stop off at Melrose on their way..

From Mrs. Davis', I walked up to call on Mrs. Brandon, some 7 or 8 blocks away. I found her as cordial and charming as ever and full of many interesting bits of data regarding Washington, Miss., including a charming sketch which someone had made of the former schoolhouse on Dunbarton Plantation where in ante-bellum days Sargent Prentiss had tutored the children of Martha Willis Dunbar. She had made a duplicate of this for me, and also had several typewritten copies of made of details regarding B.L.C. Wallis, and a copy of the rare publication which she and Magruder Drake had issued on the Life of General Cvoington. She also showed me the typewritten copy of Haye's History of Natchez which she had typed herself and had had bound for Mrs. Moore for a Christmas gift. It is unfortunate that the binder entitled the volume: "Mississippi Historical Society Journal, volume 7, instead of the title which was taken from that publication.



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I could stay but an hour with Mrs. Brandon, as I had several things to do in town before dinner at 2:30 with Rowan Flemming Byrnes, and so we said goodbye after an hour or so, and I dropped by the photographers to pick up a print he had made for me from the original sketch by Sloan of the architects original concept of Longwood. Mrs. Ward, of Landsdowne, had borrowed this from Greenleaves, and had left it with the photographer for me. It came out very nicely, and will complete the collection we now have, since we have the other four sketches,--plans,--of Sloan's original concept of the main floors of Longwood.

After brushing up a bit, I drove around to 601 South Union Street to have dinner with the Byrnes. I arrived precisely at 2:30, but I gathered that I must have made an error as to the time dinner is served in that household, as three o'clock actually seemed to be the hour.

Ferriday came in for a few moments to say Hello, and to apologize for not being able to have dinner with us. He was dressed in riding clothes, and explained that some sort of business on Beverly plantation,--a property belonging to Rowan, demanded his presence and he would have to run along. I was glad to see him, and equally delighted to greet Rowan as she appeared shortly afterward, always as lovely in appearance and voice as a lady with a kindly heart and a heart that has carried many sorrows can only project. I once heard someone say that no one had ever heard Rowan say an unkind thing about anyone,--which is certainly an exception record for any human being.

After a whiskey and soda, of which she did not partake, we went in to dinner, served with formal simplicity, and of an excellence which I have never seen surpassed in a region where Southern cooking reaches a high point in delicacy and deliciousness. I have often wondered if certain localities do actually have a particular characteristic in cooking, something which is established, possibly, by the localities geographical position, its atmospheric arrangement or its own combination of racial qualities, all of which may perhaps inter-paly upon each other and thus produce a ~~xxx~~ blend which is unique unto itself. It has always seemed to me that Paris has something of this distinctive quality, quite unlike any other place, and so has New Orleans a brand all its own. I have found another phase in Charleston, S. C., and the same may be said for rural New York and coastwise New England. I think Natchez ~~xxx~~ has a certain savory seal all its own, too, and at Rowan Byrnes and Mary Lambdin's I think I have found it at its pinnacle. Experts say that food cooked in an aluminum ~~xxx~~ pot tastes different from the same food cooked in an iron or copper one, and they go on to point out the differences produced on food by a charcoal fire as opposed to gas, wood, electric, etc, and so I imagine the vegetables grown in one type of soil and the meat raised in one range as opposed to another, and water boiled in one pressure gradient as opposed to another all combined to produce distinctive qualities and flavors. All these thoughts and a hundred others coursed through my brain as the delicious courses came and went as our conversation passed lightly from one subject to another

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Between courses, we spoke of things Natchez. Rowan said that she had never been especially interested in the past history of Natchez, and seemed to have little aptitude for comprehending it. The fact that her husband, - Ferriday, - was campaign manager in Adams County for Senator Bilbo, had somehow projected her into the fringe of politics locally, and in view of this, she had accepted the residency of the Natchez Trace Association,--much of the success of which was dependant upon politics.

As I understand it, the main purpose of the Association is to extend a fine motor parkway from Natchez to Nashville along the route followed by the original Natchez trace. From the time the Association was founded, the officers were confronted by a dual problem, neither of which could be solved, it seemed, without the other being taken care of first. The State of Mississippi was to provide funds to purchase or otherwise acquire the rights of way through private property; while, secondly, the Government was to provide the money,--and in part or in whole, the materials, labor, etc. The shoe began to pinch from the inception of the plan.

The State of Mississippi would provide funds only if the Government would guarantee to provide the construction of the highway,--while the Government would guarantee nothing until a certain amount of right of way had been provided by the State. Eventually, under Rowan's presidency of the Association, the State had provided a few hundred thousand dollars for their part of the rights of way, and shortly afterward the Government had allotted a million or two to eing operation on a certain section of the highway. It thus turned out that the two different agencies began dove-tailing, and at the moment it is the Government's turn to kick in a few more hundreds of thousands or millions to further the building and at the same time put Mississippi in a frame of mind to appropriate more funds to acquire more rights of way.

It is interesting, too, that when the developement of the trace was purposed a number of years back, one of the points brought up for seeling the idea to the Government was the importance of the trace as an artery of transportation in times of "ational emergency or actual war. That idea seemed to me one of the major ones which got the ball rolling. Then as time went by, the military aspect seemed to evaporate, and a peace-time proposition was moved to the fore. With things having moved along to the current situation, however, the old military advantage is trotted out again, and it is on this basis that the further allotment of funds is being worked upon.

We were now at dessert,--a grand home-made ice cream, and I was licking my chops for more when two or three guests arrived, joining us at the table,--people I had met three years or so back, but whose names eluded me. They accepted the invitation to partake of the ice cream, and conversation ran along gayly for another half hour when they all had to leave.



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We took our coffee in the drawing room, and quickly upon the heels of the departing dessert guests arrived a youth whom Rowan apparently believed I knew,--and she merely remarked: "Francois, of course you and Stewart know each other." Stewart seemed to know me, and so I assumed I must have known him, and it was easy enough to bounce the ball of conversation. Vaguely I remembered the voice,--I thought,--the Rev. Henry whom I had heard preach at the Presbyterian Church a few weeks back,--but he seemed so boyish and unclerical that I wasn't quite sure.

Thinking I might discover his association with the Church, if any,--I asked him if he had ever stumbled over the Rev. Joseph Straton's Diary, but he said he hadn't. I still wasn't sure of the man's identity.

Rowan wanted to take us for a little ride, and so excused herself to change. During her absence, Stewart remarked that he felt she was the most exceptional woman he had ever known from the point of view of kindness,--that he had never heard her make an unpleasant remark about anyone,--an exceptional attainment for anyone, I felt.

We spoke of the exception architectural features of the house, and for the first time, - thanks to Stewart, -I began to understand the reason for so many features which had always impressed me as examples of regrettable if not actually poor taste. Stewart said that Rowan's mother had been very fond of reading,--and particularly from the romantic sections of literature, and in consequence her husband had let his wife formulate the plans so as to incorporate many features suggesting romantic tales from her reading. This explains the presence in the drawing room of a hideous balcony,--to small for a musicians gallery and too big for a child's toy. This Stewart explained, represented the balcony of Romeo and Juliette. He also pointed out the dark scenes running around the room above the wainscoting,--with figures so small I had never been able to make them out. These, it seem, are characters from some German fairy tales of which Rowan's mother had been exceptionally fond. There are two different types of windows in this room, too,--a triptic one,--the center with an oval top,--and then along side these three openings are huge ones which run from floor to ceiling. I don't know what either of these two groups represent. The dining room, so heavy and somber is a reproduction of a similar one, as I understand it, from some old feudal dining room abroad, and of course the famous tower on this house is gained from within only by knowing the spring to the door opening into the secret stair. There is a circular light within the tower, so placed as to shine out through the windows, so that at any time of the night or any day of the month by merely turning a switch, the moon will suddenly appear from this secret tower of the imprisoned princess. All I can say is that Rowan's father was certainly indulgent to his wife's whims, and the wife's whims certainly made an architectural mess out of this house.

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Rowan joined us shortly afterward, and Randolph, her driver was waiting for us at the side door. We drove up to Clifton Heights where Frank Surget's lovely Clifton had stood until the Yankees blew it sky high in 1864. The mists were thickening, however, and it was now between five and six o'clock, so that Stewart had to go on to some appointment, and I had to say good by to my hostess, after she had driven me around to the photographers.

I had promised Charles and Myrtie to come to Cherokee for supper, and so I thought I had better freshen up a bit, and get going in that direction, although I was quite uncertain as to what hour supper might be served if dinner should be getting under way only at three and lasted until five or after. But I took a chance, arriving between 7:30 and '00, and it appeared that I was expected about that hour, although supper itself didn't appear until about 10:30,--which suited me to a "T". I cannot help but think of accounts of Paris in the late 18th century when the fashionable world had their dinners and food is about the same contradiction to the rise and setting of the sun,--and I must say I was delighted to see the custom lingering on in this remote section of the world.